BON MOTS

SAMUEL FOOTE & THEODORE HOOK.

GROTESQUES
BY AUBREY
BEARDSLEY

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OF

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EDITED BY

WALTER JERROLD

WITH GROTESQUES BY

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"*The arrival of a merry-andrew in a town is more beneficial to the health of the inhabitants than twenty asses loaded with medicine.*"

"*Now, as I never invent a jest myself, so I make it a rule never to laugh at other people's.*"—SWIFT'S *Dull Man.*

"*Let the wits and humorists be consoled; they have the best of it—and the dull ones know it.*"—R. H. HORNE.

"*He that will lose his friend for a jest deserves to die a beggar by the bargain.*"—FULLER.

"*Act freely, carelessly, capriciously; as if our veins ran with quicksilver; and not utter a phrase but what shall come forth steeped in the very brine of conceit, and sparkle like salt in fire.*" — BEN JONSON.

INTRODUCTION.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

SOME writer of the time, with a turn for nick-names, dubbed Samuel Foote "the English Aristophanes," and every writer "echoes the conceit." As an author of satirical farce and broad comedy, as a mimetic actor, and as a ready wit, he stood alone during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Petted and admired for his fortunes —he ran through *three*—and for the life and spirit with which he made himself one of the gay world, he was feared, and more or less cordially detested, as a man of ready and unmeasured wit, and of powers of mimicry which have never been equalled. His qualities as a social wit, as a teller of good stories, an utterer of *bon-mots* when "i' the vein" and among congenial company, are borne witness to by many of his friends and acquaintances. Even Doctor Johnson, "the Caliban of literature,"

could not resist him. "The first time I was in company with Foote was at Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him. But the dog was so very comical that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irresistible. He upon one occasion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer, and he was to have a share of the profits for procuring customers amongst his numerous acquaintance. Fitzherbert was one who took his small-beer; but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They were at some loss how to notify their resolution, being afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonstrance; and, having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr Fitzherbert, in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitz-

herbert's, and this boy served at table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories and merriment and grimace, that when he went downstairs, he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small-beer!'" And thus it was that the "small-beer" of Foote's somewhat coarse nature was put up with for the sake of his wit and his "loud, obstreperous, broad-faced mirth." David Garrick, Samuel Johnson, and many lesser luminaries, might fear their being "taken off" on the Haymarket stage, and threaten the mimic with chastisement legal and physical, yet they all unite in praise of his humour and wit. His humour was decidedly Aristophanic; that is to say, broad, easy, reckless, satirical, without the slightest alloy of *bonhomie*, and full of the directest personalities.—A meteor that delighted by the splendour of its blaze.—The meteor of the moment who possessed every species of wit.—He was of that sort that he would rather lose his friend than his jest.—He never stopped the career of his *bon-mot* out of respect to persons; it as readily struck a royal duke as a poor player.—His conversation was of such a description that "nought but itself could be its parallel!" Teeming with fancy, and various knowledge, fearless of consequences, and privileged in the character of a wit, he took his stand with confidence,

and threw his shafts around him with the dexterity of a master, the first and the last of his own school.—Whatever we talked about—whether fox-hunting, the turf, or any other subject—Foote instantly took the lead and delighted us all.—Very entertaining, with a kind of conversation between wit and buffoonery.—He has a great range for wit, he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse.—He has wit to ridicule you, invention to frame a story of you, humour to help it about; and when he has set the town a-laughing, he puts on a familiar air and shakes you by the hand.—He came into the room dressed out in a frock suit of green and silver lace, bag-wig, sword, bouquet, and point ruffles, and immediately joined the critical circle of the upper end of the room. Nobody knew him. He, however, soon boldly entered into conversation; and by the brilliancy of his wit, the justness of his remarks, and the unembarrassed freedom of his manners, attracted the general notice.

The following is his life in briefest outline:—1720. Born in January at Truro, Cornwall. His father was a commissioner in the prize-office, and one time M.P. for Tiverton and Mayor of Truro. His mother, Eleanor Goodere, was a woman of fortune.—Foote was educated at Worcester.—1737. Matriculated at Worcester College, Oxford. Pro-

ceeding to London, he entered the Temple and became noted as a fashionable man of the town. — 1744. Acted, anonymously and unsuccessfully, in *Othello*.—1745. Acted at Drury Lane.—1747. He opened the Haymarket Theatre; turning his talents as mimic to account in a concert, a farce, and an entertainment of his own called the *Diversions of the Morning*. This performance being stopped by the authorities, Foote invited the public to partake of "a dish of chocolate" and "a dish of tea"; which were the same kind of thing under another name.—1747. November, *Tea at 6.30* at the Haymarket.—1748. *Chocolate in Ireland*, and *An Auction of Pictures*.—1749. March, *The Knight*, comedy.—Having inherited a second fortune, Foote went abroad for a few years.—1752. *Taste*, a comedy, at Drury Lane. —1753. *The Englishman in Paris*, Covent Garden.—1756. *The Englishman returned from Paris*.—1757. *The Author*. Visited Dublin.—1759. Visited Edinburgh and Dublin.—1760. *The Mirror*.—1762. *The Orators; The Liar*.—1763. *The Mayor of Garratt*.—1764. *The Patron*.—1765. *The Commissary*.—1766. Owing to an accident when riding Foote lost a leg.—1768. *The Devil upon Two Sticks*.—1770. *The Lame Lover*.—1771. *The Maid of Bath*.—1772. *The Nabob*.—1773. *The Bankrupt*, *The Primitive Puppet Show*, and *The Handsome Housemaid, or Piety in Pattens*.—1774. *The Cozeners*.

—1776. *The Capuchin.*—1777. October 21, Died at Dover on his way to France. Buried in Westminster Abbey.

W. J.

THEODORE HOOK.

THE actual reputation of Theodore Hook is, says Doctor Garnett, "that of a great master in a low style of humour, and the most brilliant improvisatore, whether with the pen or at the piano, that his country has seen." As such indeed, is he shown to us in contemporary records from the time when, as a youth, he astonished an older and more polished wit —Sheridan—with his extraordinary powers of improvising, to the time when, done up in purse, in body, and in mind, he lay jesting upon his deathbed. In the art of punning he was without a rival, as he was also in the exercise of the still less legitimate form of humour contained in hoaxes. Early left motherless, he was injudiciously brought up by a father pleased to turn his precocious talents into a profitable channel; the result is too well-known to need enlarging upon. "Handsome, witty and happy," he was soon made free of the green-room and other centres of exhilarating life; he became a much-sought-after member of society on account of his wonderful entertaining powers,

and to be much in society during the earlier part of this century meant too often consequent dissipation, and Hook paid the penalty both in character and in body for the life into which he had thus been placed, while yet a mere youth. Entirely unaccustomed to anything in the shape of business routine, he received a responsible position in the Mauritius, from which he was removed later on, there being found a deficiency in his accounts of some twelve thousand pounds; Hook, although not made criminally responsible, was adjudged a debtor to the Crown for that amount. Let us, however, turn to the records of this brilliant and unflagging wit, and see how his powers as a conversationalist, an improvisatore, and sayer of good things, impressed those among whom the good things were said. It may be noted, in passing, as curious that despite the unanimity with which his improvising powers were spoken of as unique, but few of the improvisations have got committed to paper.—It seemed as if his talent was essentially oral, and refused to give itself wholly to a more permanent means of sustaining his reputation.—The exuberance of his fun was irrepressible.—Unabating spirit and unflagging mirth made him the soul and centre of the convivial circle.—Since the days of Sheridan no more brilliant luminary had flashed across the realm of fashion.—All Hook's wit and gaiety was original, impromptu, the

offspring of the moment.—His conversation was an unceasing stream of wit of which he was profuse as if he knew the source to be inexhaustible.—His jest was always ready, and his repartee so prompt and so surely a hit, slight if playful, but heavy if provoked, that all around him soon became aware that his fires were either innocuously glancing or scorching as the circumstance inflamed or called them forth.—He was, as entirely as any parents of *bon-mots* we have known, above the suspicion of having premeditated his point.—The unvaried and irrepressible ebullience of Theodore Hook's vivacity, which was a manifest exuberance from the conjunction of rampant animal spirits, a superabundance of corporeal vitality, a vivid sense of the ludicrous, a consciousness of his own unparalleled readiness and self-possession, not to say an effrontery that nothing could daunt.—He was tall, dark, and of a good person, with small eyes, and features more round than weak; a face that had character and humour, but no refinement.—He continued to sparkle humour even when exhausted nature failed, and his last words are said to have been a brilliant jest.--No definition either of wit or humour could have been framed that must not have included him.—His life, in outline, is as follows: —1788. Theodore Edward Hook was born in London on September 22. His father, James Hook, was a popular composer; his mother,

whose maiden name was Madden, wrote several novels.—Educated at private schools; a short time at Harrow and Oxford.—1805. *The Soldier's Return*, a drama.—1806. *Catch him who Can* and *Killing no Murder*, farces.—1809. Berners Street hoax.—1813. Appointed accountant-general and treasurer of the island of Mauritius.—1817. Returned to England.—1819. *Exchange no Robbery*, farce; *The Arcadian*, an ephemeral magazine; *Tentamen*, a satire on Queen Caroline.—1820. Appointed editor of *John Bull*.—1823-25. In prison for debt to the Crown.—1826-29. *Sayings and Doings*.—1830. *Maxwell*.—1832. *Life of Sir David Baird*.—1833. *The Parson's Daughter* and *Love and Pride*.—1836. Editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*; *Gilbert Gurney*; *Jack Brag*.—1838. *Gurney Married*.—1839. *Births, Marriages, and Deaths*.—1841. Died at Fulham on August 24.

W. J.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

BON-MOTS

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SAMUEL FOOTE.

A GENTLEMAN in the country who had just buried a rich relation, an attorney, was complaining to Foote, who happened to be on a visit to him, of the very great expense of a country funeral in respect to carriages, hat-bands, scarves, &c.

"Why, do you bury your attorneys here?" asked Foote gravely.

"Yes, to be sure; what else should we do?"

"Oh, we never do that in London."

"No," rejoined the other, much surprised; "how do you manage?"

"Why, when the patient happens to die, we lay him out in a room overnight by himself, lock the door, throw open the window, and in the morning he is entirely off."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the other in amazement, "what becomes of him?"

"Why, that we cannot exactly tell, not being acquainted with supernatural causes. All that we know of the matter is—that there's a strong smell of brimstone in the room the next morning."

FOOTE asked a man who certainly "had no music in his soul," why he was for ever humming a certain tune.

"Because it haunts me," was the reply.

"I don't wonder at that; you are for ever murdering it," retorted Foote.

AFTER having been scolded by a lady of his acquaintance, Foote said to her, "I have heard of tartar and brimstone; you are the cream of one and the flower of the other."

THE Duke of Cumberland went into Foote's green-room at the Haymarket Theatre on one occasion, saying, "Well, Foote, here I am ready, as usual, to swallow all your good things."

"Upon my soul," replied Foote, "your Royal Highness must have an excellent digestion, for you never bring any up again."

A GENTLEMAN introduced his very plain wife to Foote, and seeing him rather struck with her homely appearance, observed, "that though *his* Helen could not boast much beauty, she was a very excellent domestic woman for all that."

"I have no doubt of it, my good fellow," said Foote, "I was only thinking what a thousand pities it is that the Grecian Helen was *not more like her;* for, had she been so, Troy most certainly would never have been burnt."

A NOBLE duke who was much addicted to the bottle, on a masquerade night asked Foote, with whom he was intimate, "what new character he should go in?"

"Go sober," replied Foote readily.

SAID a lady to Foote, "Pray, Mr Foote, what sort of a man is Sir John D.?"

"Oh! a very good sort of man."

"But what do you call a good sort of a man?"

"Why, Madam, *one who preserves all the exterior decencies of ignorance.*"

ONE morning Foote came upon the Haymarket stage during the rehearsal of the *Spanish Barber*, then about to be produced; the performers were busy in that scene of the piece when one servant is under the influence of a sleeping draught and the other of a sneezing powder.

"Well," said Foote drily to the manager, Colman, "how do you go on?"

"Pretty well," was the answer, "but I cannot teach one of these fellows to gape as he ought to do."

"Can't you?" replied Foote, "then read him your last comedy of the *Man of Business*, and he 'll yawn for a month."

HEARING that a friend of his, of no great legal abilities, nor of any settled fortune, had been promoted to the office of attorney-general in one of the West India islands, Foote exclaimed, "Alas, poor Jack! Hitherto he had the art of concealing his wants, but now he'll be completely exposed, for *necessity* has no *law*."

A CELEBRATED doctor who was about to set up a coach consulted Foote as to the choice of a motto.

"What are your arms?" asked the wit.

"Three mallards," said the doctor.

"Very good," said Foote, "then the motto I would recommend to you is '*Quack—Quack—Quack.*'"

AN author left a comedy with Foote for perusal, and on his next visit asked the wit's judgment on it, with rather an ignorant degree of assurance.

"If you looked a little more to the grammar of it, I think," said Foote, "it would be better."

"To the grammar of it, sir. What! would you send me to school again?"

"And pray, sir," replied Foote very gravely, "would that do you any harm?"

BADDELEY, the Drury Lane actor of cake fame, was originally a cook, and as such was employed by Foote, with whom, however, later he quarrelled and even challenged him to a duel. The comedian declined, saying, "Here is a pretty fellow! I allow him to take my spit from the rack and stick it by his side, and now he wants to stick me with it."

GARRICK'S notorious meanness furnished Foote with many opportunities for witticisms. At one of Foote's dinner parties an announcement was made of the arrival of Mr Garrick's servants.

"Oh! let them wait," said the host to his footman, adding, "but be sure you lock up the pantry!"

A MAN of business had written a poem, and exacted from Foote a promise to listen to it.

The author pompously began :—

"'Hear me, O Phœbus, and ye Muses nine!'

Pray, pray be attentive, Mr Foote."

"I am," said Foote, "nine and one are ten. Go on!"

WHEN Digges, an actor of much celebrity out of London, came to town from Edinburgh covered with Scottish laurels, he made his first appearance at the Haymarket. He had studied the antiquated style of acting—in short, he was a fine bit of old stage buckram—and Cato was therefore selected for his first essay. He appeared in the same costume as, it is to be supposed, was adopted by Booth when the play was originally acted; that is, in a shape, as it was technically termed, of the stiffest order, decorated with gilt leather upon a black ground, with black stockings, black gloves, and a powdered periwig.

Foote had planted himself in the pit, when Digges stalked on the stage thus formidably accoutred. The wag waited till the customary round of applause had subsided, and then ejaculated, in a pretended undertone, loud enough to be heard by all around him, "A Roman chimney-sweeper on Mayday!"

The laughter which this produced in the pit was enough to knock up a *débutant*, and it startled the old stager personating the stoic of Utica.*

* "The scarcasm was irresistibly funny," adds the biographer of the Colmans, who tells the tale, and then, amusingly enough, concludes, "but Foote deserved to be kicked out of the house for his cruelty."

WHEN Foote was told that his leg would have to be cut off, he merely said, "Now I shall take off old Faulkner to the life," Faulkner having lost one of his legs.

FOOTE was dining one day with Lord Townsend, after his duel with Lord Bellamont, and the wine being bad, and the dinner ill-dressed, he observed that he could not discover what reason compelled his lordship to fight, when he might have effected his purpose with much more ease to himself.

"How?" enquired his lordship.

"How!" echoed the wit, "why you should have given him a *dinner* like this, and *poisoned him.*"

A GENTLEMAN who called to pay a morning visit to Foote took notice of a bust of Garrick on the bureau.

"Do you know my reason," asked Foote, "for making Roscius stand sentry there?"

"Really I do not," replied his friend.

"I placed him there," resumed the wit, "*to take care of my money*, for, by God, I can't take care of it myself."

A REMARKABLY ill-favoured gentleman was met by Foote at Lucas's coffee-house. Foote asked him where he had been.

"I have been taking the air this morning," said he, "which was rather disagreeable too, as I had a damned North wind full in my face all the time."

"Come, come," said Foote, "don't *you* complain, for the North wind had the worst of it."

A LADY of fashion inscribed on an inn window, "Dear Lord D. has the *softest* lips of any man in England."

Foote coming into the room soon after, exclaimed, on reading this—

"Then as like as two chips
Are his head and his lips."

WALKING on the Parade at Bath in company with a friend, Foote returned the salute of a man of fashion who bore a somewhat suspicious character.

"Do you know whom you saluted?" asked the friend.

"Oh, yes, perfectly well, but what can a man do? You know there's no *turning one's back* upon such fellows."

A GOOD artist was described by Foote as one who overlooked the ugliness and yet preserved the likeness.

WHEN Macklin was giving his miscellaneous coffee-house lectures, Foote, who was a frequent attendant, was never tired of quizzing the lecturer. On one occasion Macklin was speaking of memory, and claiming for himself that on one reading he could learn anything by rote. Foote waited until the lecture was concluded, and then handed up the following famous sentences of nonsense, asking that Mr Macklin would be good enough to read them and then repeat them from memory :—

"So she went into the garden to cut a cabbage-leaf, to make an apple-pie ; and at the same time a great she-bear, coming up the street, pops its head into the shop. 'What! no soap?' So he died, and she very imprudently married the barber; and there were present the Piccaninnies, and the Joblillies, and the Garyulies, and the grand Panjandrum himself, with the little round button at top ; and they all fell to playing the game of catch as catch can, till the gunpowder ran out the heels of their boots."

It is needless to say that the laugh was turned against Macklin.*

* A mangled version of this is ascribed by Frederic Reynolds in his *Recollections*, to Curran.

A PEDANTIC individual who had been to call upon Lord Leicester, met Foote, and said, "I called upon Lord *Lei-ces-ter*, but he was not at home."

By way of rebuke Foote replied, "Nor any of his *pe-o-ple*, either, I suppose."

OF an Irish would-be votary of Apollo, Foote said that he expected every day to see him, by some of his irascible countrymen. soused in the neighbouring stream—which was the only chance he had of ever resembling the swans of Avon.

AFTER satirising someone rather unmercifully, Garrick wound up his attack by saying, "Well, well, perhaps before I condemn another, I should pull the *beam* out of my own eye."

"Ay," replied Foote, "and so you would if you could *sell the timber*."

OF a certain law-lord and would-be wit, Foote said, adapting Falstaff's well-known words, "What can he mean by coming among us? He is not only dull himself, but the cause of dulness in others."

A COUNTRY clergyman, not much celebrated as a preacher, gave as a reason for wearing heavy boots on duty, "that the roads were so *deep* in some places, that he found them more convenient than shoes."

"Yes," said Foote, "and, I daresay, equally convenient in the pulpit, for there you are generally *out of your depth* too."

A FOREIGNER who was present at a musical piece which was damned the first night of its performance, asked Foote who the author was. Being told that his name was St John, he asked again, "*St Jean, St Jean, quel St Jean ?*"

"*Oh, Monsieur,*" cried Foote, "*le gentilhomme sans* la tête."

WHEN Foote was under a cloud, George the Third commanded the performances, and a new play, the *Contract*, taken by Dr Thomas Franklin from the *Triple Marriage* of Destouches, was played after one of Foote's comedies. When Foote lighted the King to his chair, his Majesty asked who the piece was written by.

"By one of your Majesty's chaplains," said

Foote, "and dull enough to have been written by a bishop."

DINING at the house of a friend where a Bishop was present, Foote was in high spirits and talked immoderately. At length, the prelate, waxing wroth over Foote's entirely monopolising the talk, said, "When will that player leave off preaching."

"Oh! my lord," replied Foote pointedly, "the moment I am made a Bishop."

FOOTE proposed to exhibit a puppet-show imitation of Garrick's Shakespeare Jubilee procession.

"Pray, sir," asked a lady of fashion, "are your puppets to be as large as life?"

"Oh, dear madam, no," replied Foote, "not much above the size of Garrick."

THE wit appears to have entertained a sovereign contempt for port wine. As soon as the cloth was removed from the table, he would ask his guests, "Does anybody drink port?"

If the unanimous answer happened to be "no," he always ordered the servant to "take away the *ink*."

MURPHY, the author, was about to produce a piece in which Mrs Cibber was to take the part of the heroine, when, being at dinner with Foote, a note came from the actress pleading sudden illness and inability to perform, and concluding with "praying earnestly for the success of the piece."

When Murphy had read this note, he handed it over to Foote; who, after perusing it very carefully, asked his friend what was Mrs Cibber's religion.

"Roman Catholic, I believe," said Murphy.

"I thought so," added Foote, "*by her praying so earnestly for the dead.*"

FOOTE was to dine in the country, and the whole of the party was assembled with the exception of a whimsical gentleman who wore

a *black* scratch wig. At length the company saw somebody in motion down a fine avenue of trees, but a dispute arose at the window as to whether it could be the gentleman for whom they were waiting.

"It is certainly he, or Charles the Second," said Foote, "for I distinctly see a black wig bobbing up and down among the *oaks*."

AN actress complained to Foote one day of the low salary she had from Garrick, at Drury Lane, on which Foote asked her why she had gone to him, knowing the salary she might have had at the Haymarket.

"Oh, I don't know how it was," she said, "but he talked me over so by telling me he would make me immortal, that I did not know how to refuse him."

"Did he so, indeed?" said Foote. "Well then, I suppose I must outbid him that way. Come to me, then, when you are free. I 'll give you two pounds a week more, and charge you nothing for immortality!"

THE lottery of marriage Foote described as like "bobbing for a single eel in a barrel of snakes."

IN the hey-day of Foote's extravagance, in his own kitchen, port is said to have been drunk oftener than beer. And the story goes, that dining at the table of a nobleman, whose taste ran to the opposite extreme, and who drank nothing but port himself, and restricted his guests to the same, Foote met his wine merchant, who asked how the last supply of port turned out.

"Why,' answered Foote, "I should suppose pretty well, as I have had no complaints *from the kitchen*."

RICH, the actor, had a vulgar habit of calling everybody Mister. Foote was so offended at being thus addressed that he asked Rich the reason of his not giving him his proper name.

"Don't be angry," Rich replied, "for, I assure you, I sometimes forget my own name."

"Indeed!" retorted Foote, "that is extraordinary; for I knew you could not write your own name, but I didn't suppose you could forget it."

MY horse, sir! Why, I'll wager it to stand still faster than yours can gallop!

SOMEONE having said, "What a pleasure it is to pay our debts," Foote immediately gave the following lecturette on *The advantage of not paying our debts.*

"This pre-supposes a person to be a man of fortune; otherwise he would not gain credit. It is the art of living without money. It saves the trouble and expense of keeping accounts; and makes other people work, in order to give ourselves repose. It prevents the cares and embarrassments of riches. It checks avarice, and encourages generosity; as people are commonly more liberal of others' goods than their own: while it possesses that genuine spark of primitive Christianity which would live in a constant communion of all property. In short, it draws the inquiries and attention of the world on us while we live, and makes us *sincerely regretted* when we die."

WHEN a piece of Foote's was being acted at a Dublin theatre, the band—not having been given any music—did not strike up in the proper place. Foote immediately appeared on the stage, though not acting, and advancing to the footlights, said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am so sorry for your disappointment; but the cause of it is soon explained—*There is no music in the orchestra.*"

FOOTE, on being asked his opinion of the great Shakespeare Jubilee at Stratford-on Avon, replied:—A Jubilee is a public invitation, urged by puffing, to go post without horses to an obscure borough without representatives; governed by a mayor and aldermen who are no magistrates; to celebrate a great poet whose own works have made him immortal by an ode without poetry; music without melody; a dinner without victuals; lodgings without beds; a crowd without company; a masquerade where half the people appear barefaced; a horse-race up to the knees in water; fireworks extinguished as soon as they are lighted; and a boarded booth by way of amphitheatre, which is to be taken down in three days, and sold by public auction.

AFTER the long confinement which necessarily followed the amputation of his leg, Foote described what he had gone through, incidentally exclaiming, "What bushels of bark have I taken! Poets talk of their Dryads and Fauns, the fabulous tenants of forests and groves; now *I have literally swallowed a wood.*"

FOOTE walking up and down the rooms at Bath, a gentleman with him asked a third a lady's name just then passing by them, to which he replied, "Brown, sir."

"Ay," said Foote, staring at the lady, "a lovely *Brown* indeed."

SOMEONE having said of Foote after he had lost a leg that he was then under the necessity of growing speedily rich, Foote wanted to know whether the friend meant that "now I have but one leg it won't be so easy for me *to run out;* perhaps, however," he added, "like Warburton on Shakespeare, I have found a meaning the author never had."

THE building of Richmond Bridge was being discussed, when some nobleman enquired whether the piers were to be built of wood or stone.

"Stone, to be sure," said Foote, "for there are too many wooden *peers* in this country already."

TALKING of the best method of cutting up a haunch of venison, Foote said, "the best carver in the world was a man who could cut up a haunch dexterously, and eat none himself."

FOOTE having received much attention from the Eton boys, in showing him about the College, collected them about him in the quadrangle.

"Now, young gentlemen," said he, "what can I do for you to show you how much I am obliged to you?"

"Tell us, Mr Foote," begged the leader, "the best thing you ever said."

"Well," rejoined Foote, "I once saw a little blackguard of a chimney-sweeper mounted on a noble steed, prancing and curveting in all the pride and magnificence of nature. 'There,' said I, 'goes Warburton on Shakespeare.'"

WHEN in Dublin it was expected that Foote would make much wit out of a stupid, over-dressed fop—Cook by name. Asked his opinion of the beau, he replied, "I think this same Mr Cook the most sensible, well-bred man in your whole city."

FOOTE had a small bust of Garrick on his bureau; "You will be surprised," he remarked to a friend, "that I allow him so near my gold,—but, you will observe, he has no hands!"

AT one of the coffee-houses which Foote frequented he and some friends were making a collection for the relief of a poor fellow—a decayed actor—who was nicknamed the Captain of the Four Winds, because his hat was worn into four spouts. Each person present dropped his contribution into the hat as it was held out to him. Seeing what a respectable sum was made up, Foote, never losing the chance of a thrust at money-loving Garrick, exclaimed, "If Garrick hears of this he will certainly send us *his* hat."

AT a dinner at which Foote was present, during a Scotch trip, an old lady being called upon for a toast, gave *Charles the Third.*

"Of Spain, Madam?" inquired Foote.

"No, sir," cried the old lady indignantly, "of England."

"Pooh! never mind her," said one of the company, "she is one of our old folks, who have not got rid of their political prejudices."

"Oh! dear sir, make no apology," cried Foote, "I was prepared for all this; as, from your living so far north as you do, I suppose none of you have *yet* heard of the *Revolution!*"

MRS CIBBER having had some little quarrel with Garrick about increase of salary, in which, after some struggles, she succeeded, was soon afterwards singing a popular song of the day with the following line in it:—

"The roses will bloom when there's peace in the breast."

"Very true," said Foote, singing out to the same tune—

"So the turtles will coo *when they've peas in their craws.*"

ONE of the Haymarket actors, praising a loin of veal on Foote's table, asked him who was his butcher.

"I think his name is Addison," said Foote.

"Addison!" exclaimed the other, "I wonder is he any relation to the great Addison?"

"Why, that I don't exactly know: and yet I think he must be, as he is seldom without his *steel* (Steele) by his side."

WHEN Macklin was giving his coffee-house lectures on oratory, Foote, who was then a dashing young man of the town, attended them constantly, and was as much the object of attention to the company as the

orator. One night when Macklin was formally preparing to begin, hearing Foote rattling loudly away at the lower end of the room, and thinking at once to silence him, he called out in a sarcastic manner, "Pray, young man, do you know what I am going to say?"

"No, sir," said Foote readily, "*do you?*"

A POOR author, who was not remarkable for cleanliness, dining with Foote, Lord K., who happened to be at the table, was complimenting him on his latest performance.

"Oh, my lord!" said the scribe, "now you are *ironing** me."

"Not he, indeed," said Foote, "for if his ordship meant to do that, he certainly would have *washed you first.*"

ONE gentleman, at a coffee-house, was reproving another, saying that he always forgot when his reckoning was paid for him, but was sure to remember when he paid for anybody else.

"Yes, poor fellow," said Foote, "'tis owing to an infirmity he has got—he has lost *half* of his memory."

* A slang word of the time for the exercise of irony.

A LADY who was very large and fat was walking on the Steine at Brighton one day, when somebody exclaimed, "Here comes Mrs Gammon!"

"Who?" said Foote, holding up his glass at the same time, "only a *single gammon?* Why, 'tis the *whole of the old sow herself.*"

AN actor was observing to Foote what a humdrum kind of man Goldsmith appeared to be in the green-room, compared with the figure he made in his poetry.

"The reason of that," answered Foote, "is plain,—because the *muses* are better companions than the *players.*"

DURING the Shakespeare Jubilee festival at Stratford-on-Avon, Foote distinguished himself at all the public places, in a capital line of wit and brilliancy. Being on the green one evening, rattling away in his usual manner, a large fat country squire, most gorgeously dressed out in silver-laced clothes, approached the circle with great civility. Foote, taking him for one of the better sort of natives of the town, thought this a good opportunity to pick up some anecdotes about Shakespeare; but the squire, to avoid a subject for which he was

totally unfit, turned it off by complaining of the badness of the roads, the extortion of the inns, bad beds, &c.

"Oh! then it appears," said Foote, "you are not a native of this town."

"No, no, sir," answered the squire, "I am no native, I came all the way from Essex to see the show."

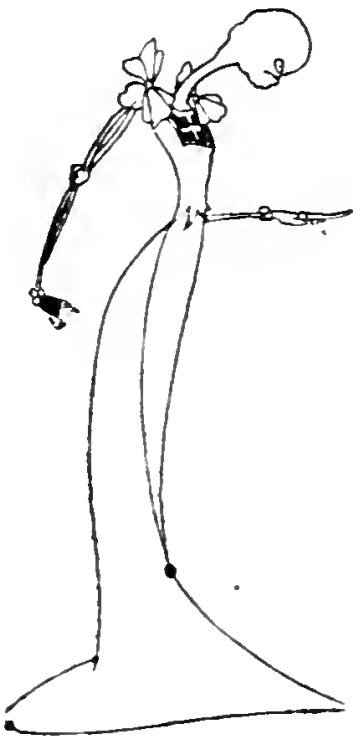
"From Essex!" retorted Foote (seeming as though in great surprise, and viewing him from head to heel), "and pray, sir, let me ask you one question more: *who drove you?*"

ONE of the actors whom Foote had mimicked resented it so much that he insisted upon an apology or a duel. He called upon Foote, when the wit asked him what he had to complain of; adding: "Sir, you seem to be of opinion that *taking any person off* is making them ridiculous; if you will but have a moment's patience you shall see me *take myself off.*"

Foote then left the room, and it was some time before the actor realised that he had, literally, taken himself off.

A GENTLEMAN at Foote's table complaining that the beer was cold, "Hand the tankard then to Lord Kellie," said he, "and it will be *fire-proof* in a moment."

FOOTE having some pique towards Colonel Bowden, who stuttered very badly, he happened to cross him on the Richmond road, as he was taking a drive with a friend.



"How do you do, Colonel?" asks Foote's companion.

"Pre-pre-pre-pretty," stammered the Colonel in his effort to say pretty well. Foote ordering the post-boy to drive on, his companion exclaimed, "Why do you drive off so rudely?"

"Oh," replied Foote, "to save time; as we shall be at Hounslow before he'll be *well enough* to give you an answer."

A WORTHY knight, accustomed to swear at every other word, called one day on Foote, after being present at some fire-extinguishing experiments. Foote enquired if the chemical balls used were effectual.

"Ay, damme," said the other, "they would extinguish hell fire."

"Then," said Foote, "you had better order a number of them to be put into your coffin."

AT an evening party a gentleman seeing some wax fall from the chandelier on the bosom of the dress of a lady who sat next to him, immediately took out his watch and clapped one of the seals upon it.

"Bless me, sir, what are you doing?" asked the astonished lady.

"Why, madam," said Foote, "he is only trying to *make an impression* upon you."

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"WHAT could possess you, Foote, to go on the stage and play the fool?" asked a not over wise nobleman.

"The very same reason that actuates your lordship to play it off the stage."

"What can that be?"

"Want," replied the wit.

"Want!" echoed his lordship.

"Ay," said Foote, "Want of money makes me play the fool, and want of wit your lordship."

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LORD KELLIE having cracked some rather coarse jokes at the expense of a friend, an Irishman who heard it said, "If he had treated me so, I would have pulled him by the nose."

"Pull *him* by the nose!" exclaimed Foote, "you might just as well thrust your hand into a furnace."

THE glass having gone merrily round one evening, Foote, as toast-master, called on a young nobleman remarkable for his licentiousness, for his toast.

"Dammie," said he, "I 'll give you 'the Devil.'"

"Very good," answered Foote, "I have no objection to any of your lordship's friends."

WHEN Foote was in Edinburgh, a gentleman having taken him round and shown him all the things of beauty and interest, asked what he thought the most agreeable prospect in Scotland.

"Why, to be plain with you," said Foote, "much the finest prospect you have is the road to England."

IT being told to Foote that Garrick, on his visiting friends and acquaintances in the country, always left behind him verses in fulsome praise of his host, he immediately produced these lines :—

"Wherever Garrick dines or sleeps,
He drops a doggerel rhyme;
The snail thus marks the road she creeps,
By slobb'ring sordid slime."

CONVERSATION turning one day on a lady having married very happily, whose previous life had been of very doubtful complexion, some one attributed the unexpected result to her having frankly told her husband, before marriage, *all* that had happened. "What candour she must have had, what honesty!" was the general remark.

"Yes," said Foote, "and what an amazing memory!"

DURING one of his trips to Dublin, Foote was much solicited by a young man of fashion to assist him in a miscellany of poems and essays, which he was about to publish. When Foote asked to see the MS., the young man said, "that at present he had only *conceived* the different poems, but had put none of them to paper."

"Oh, if that be the state of the case," replied Foote, "I will give you a motto from Milton for the work in its present condition—

'*Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme!*'"

FOOTE, who lived on terms of intimacy with Lord Kellie, took as many liberties with his Bardolphian countenance as did ever Falstaff with that of his friend. One day his lordship, choosing to forget his promise of dining with Foote, the latter was piqued so that he called out loud enough to be heard by all in the coffee-room, "Well, my lord, since you cannot do me the honour of dining with me to-day, will you be so good as you ride by, just to *look over* against my south wall? For, as we have had little or no sun for this fortnight past, my peaches will want the assistance of your lordship's *countenance*."

A PLAY of words between Foote and Quin has been well versified as follows:—

As Quin and Foote
One day walked out
To view the country round,
In merry mood
They chatting stood
Hard by the village pound.

Foote from his poke
A shilling took,
And said, "I 'll bet a penny,
In a short space
Within this place
I 'll make this piece a guinea."

Upon the ground,
Within the pound,
  The shilling soon was thrown :
" Behold," says Foote,
" The thing 's made out,
For there is one pound one."

" I wonder not,"
Says Quin, " that thought
  Should in your head be found;
Since that 's the way
Your debts you pay—
  A shilling in the pound "

SOME one dining with Foote at his Fulham house said that " much as he loved porter he could never drink it *without a head*."

" That must be a mistake," said his host, " as you have done so to my knowledge about these twenty years."

A FRIEND of Foote's published a book called his *Own Thoughts*, of which he promised a *second part*. The friend being in company with Foote some time after at the Bedford coffee-house, pressed him to give an opinion of the book, which the wit at first declined. At length, being at a loss for an excuse, he replied, " Sir, I will wait for your next book—*second thoughts are best*."

AT the time of the Stratford Jubilee, planned and conducted by Garrick in honour of Shakespeare, the weather turned out wet and cold, especially the day set apart for the grand procession.

Garrick, meeting Foote that morning in the public breakfast room, just as a heavy shower commenced, exclaimed with evident chagrin, "Well, Sam, what do you think of all this?"

"Think of it," answered Foote with a thrust at Garrick's weakness; "why, as a Christian should do, I think it is *God's revenge against vanity.*"

DELAVAL having presented his chaplain to a good living, a person in company said, "Well, let the Delavals alone for doing things in *good style.*"

"That may be so," said Foote, "but it is not, however, their usual *gait.*"

BEING asked at what age he thought female beauty declined, Foote replied, "Woman is to be counted like a game of piquet: twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine,—*sixty.*"

RETURNING from dining with a Lord of the Admiralty, Foote was met by a friend, who asked him what sort of a day he had had.

"Very indifferent, indeed; bad company, and a worse dinner."

"I wonder at that," said the other, "as I thought the Admiral a jolly good fellow."

"Why, as to that, he may be very good as a *sea-lord;* but take it from me, he is very bad as a *land-lord.*"

ON another day, returning from the same hospitable board, he exclaimed, "Worse and worse! everything about the table stunk except the vinegar—and that was *sweet.*"

HOLLAND, a pupil of Garrick's, and actor at Drury Lane Theatre, was the son of a baker; he was a great friend of Foote, to whom he left a legacy, and whom he appointed as one of the bearers at his funeral.

Looking in at the Bedford coffee-house after the last sad office, Foote was asked if he had attended the remains of his old friend to their last resting-place. "Yes," he replied (the tears scarce dry upon his cheeks), "poor fellow, I have just seen him *shoved into the family oven.*"

AFTER the death of Lady Delaval, a friend meeting Foote, said he had just seen Sir Francis dressed in deep mourning, by which he supposed he must have lost some valued friend.

"Oh! no," said Foote, "not at all; Frank's *only a widower*."

SIR FRANCIS DELAVAL and Foote were passing through Soho, not a little inebriated—when a fair resident of the neighbourhood called out to them from a window. This was enough to excite the gallantry of Sir Francis, who instantly dropping on one knee, theatrically exclaimed, "*Ah, ma chere belle!*"

Foote, determined not to be outdone in gallantry, placed himself in a similar attitude by the side of Sir Francis, and exclaimed in the same impassioned tone and manner, "Ah, ma Jeze-bel!"

A YOUNG actress having made her debût at the Haymarket Theatre with very indifferent success, was every now and then soliciting Foote to know "when she should make her next appearance."

"Your next appearance?" said he one day musingly, "let me see; why, madam, you shall make your next appearance—*when the public has forgotten your first*."

FOOTE was rattling away in his usual lively manner, at a friend's table, when a young gentleman, who either had a mind to set up as a second-hand wit, or wanted to cheapen the talent, requested him "to give him his last good thing."

"Why, so I would," said Foote, "if I could trust you."

"What, do you doubt my integrity?"

"Not at all, my dear sir," replied the ever-ready wit, "but I do your *steadiness;* for, believe me, there are very few people that *can carry a bon-mot safely.*"

WHEN Foote first heard of Dr Blair's writing *Notes on Ossian*, he observed that the booksellers ought to allow a great discount to the purchasers; as the notes required such a *stretch of credit.*

HE used to say that the difference of the *hue* of a court after the death of a *general officer* or of a *bishop*, was that of a lobster *before* and *after* boiling.

DINING at a nobleman's table, where the company were praising the claret, his lordship explained that he had received a hogshead of that wine in return for a couple of hounds which he had presented to Count Lanragais.

"Why, then, my lord," exclaimed Foote, "I not only think your wine excellent, but *dog cheap* into the bargain."

MEETING a lady at Brighton, Foote asked what brought her there.

"Why, really," said she, "I don't know; mere wantonness, I believe."

"And pray, my lady," asked Foote, "have you been cured yet?"

OF a young gentleman who was rather backward in paying his debts, Foote said with emphasis, "He is a *very promising* young man."

WHEN Foote was in Ireland, on seeing the wretched appearance of the peasantry there, particularly in regard to their apparel, he observed, "that he never knew before what the beggars in England did with their *cast-off clothes*."

A PERSON abusing actors in general, said that they had "not even one grain of *gratitude* about them."

"Nay, now," said Foote, "you are too severe upon the profession; for to my certain knowledge, there are no people more distressed at *benefits forgotten*."

FOOTE was dining in a mixed company soon after the death of one friend and the bankruptcy of another; the conversation, not unnaturally, turned upon the mutability of the world.

"Can you account for this?" asked Scott, a master-builder, who sat by Foote.

"Only by one supposition," answered Foote, "and that is, *that the world was built by contract*."

A REMARKABLY thin lady seriously asked Foote whether he believed in spirits.

"Ay, madam," answered he, looking her full in the face, "*as sure as you are there*."

OF an actress who was remarkably awkward with her arms, Foote said, "she kept the races at arm's-length."

SOMEBODY praising Archibald Hamilton as a well-read man, Foote said that he did not see much of that about him. "I grant you he *reads* a great many *proofs;* but these are no *proofs of his reading.*"

AN absurd custom prevailed in the Dublin Theatre at the time of Foote's visit. Any particular part of a performance which pleased the audience they continued applauding until the curtain fell, and the play had to finish though in the middle. Such tribute of applause generally fell to the lot of the manager (the elder Sheridan), and was therefore winked at, through vanity. Foote attempted to cure him of it by this strange proposal:—

"My dear Sheridan," said he, "I have a thought just struck me, which I imagine would relieve you of a great deal of labour and trouble."

"In what manner?" asked Sheridan eagerly, "do inform me, and I shall be much obliged to you."

"Why, instead, of the character of *Richard the Third*, can't you play King Henry in the same tragedy?"

"Good Heavens! Mr Foote, why should I relinquish *Richard*, when you have often been a witness of my getting such universal applause in the part?"

"For that very reason, my dear friend," said Foote, "for if you'll but perform Henry instead of Richard, the play, you know, from the applause you'll get in dying, will finish in the first act, and then we can all go home in good time to supper."

A CERTAIN baronet, a *distiller* by profession, made a speech in Parliament in favour of the Administration, in the course of which he "proved rather too much." Some members of the Opposition were jesting with Foote about it the next day.

"Ah," said he, "Sir Joseph would be a very good sort of man, if he would only bring out with him what he generally leaves at home—a *still-head*."

OF the difference between intuition and sagacity, Foote said that the first was the *eye*, and the other the *nose* of the mind.

FOOTE, dining one gala day at the Duke of Leinster's in Dublin, where all the family plate was brought out, and the table covered with a profusion of made dishes, happened on the same night to sup at the Countess of Brandon's, who, seeing him eat rather heartily, cried out, "Why, Foote, I thought you dined with the Duke to-day, who entertains in the grandest style of any man in Ireland?"

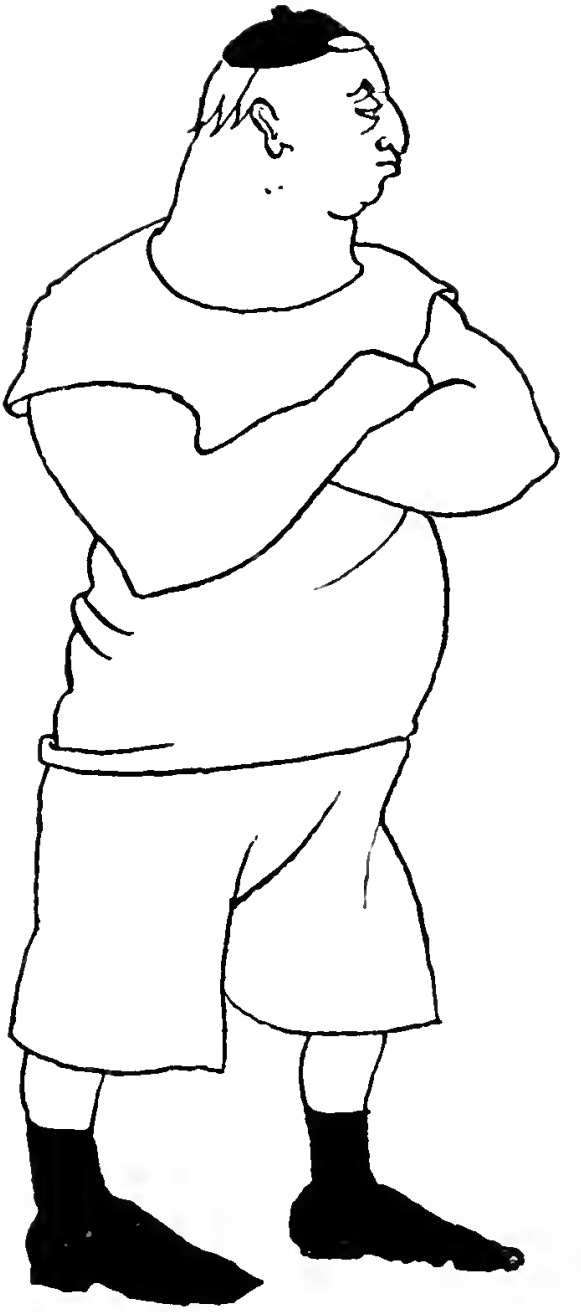
"That may be so, my lady," answered the wit, "but it is not in my style to dine in a *silversmith's shop*, and have all the victuals brought from the *apothecary's*."

SOME actors were rallying Dibble Davis one morning in the green-room, on the awkward cut of a new coat. Dibble apologised for his own taste by saying, "It was the fault of the tailor."

"Yes," said Foote, "poor man; and his *misfortune* too."

A PERSON of somewhat doubtful integrity was bragging to Foote, "that however other people might act, he had the satisfaction to feel that his *heart* always lay at his *tongue's end*."

"I always thought so," said Foote, "as I never knew it lie in the right place."



A FRIEND'S death had such an effect on Foote, that he burst into tears, retired to his room, and saw no company for two days; the third day, Jewel, his treasurer, calling in upon him, he asked him, with swollen eyes, what time the funeral was to be.

"Not till next week, sir," replied the other, "as I hear that the surgeons are first to dissect his head."

These last words restored Foote's fancy, and repeating them with some surprise, he asked—

"And what will they get there? I am sure I have known poor Frank these five and twenty years, and I could never find anything in it."

FOOTE was riding out on the Downs near Bath in company with a friend, when they observed, at some distance, a person coming towards them, who appeared to be dressed out in gold lace.

"What beau on horseback is this?" asked his friend; and then added, on his coming a little nearer, "P'shaw! 'tis nobody after all but the little quicksilver apothecary with his tawdry waistcoat."

"Be a little more circumspect for the future," said Foote, "as you see it is not all gold that *glisters*."

AN assuming pedantic lady, boasting of the many books which she had read, often quoted *Locke on the Human Understanding*. "A work which," she said, "she admired above all things; yet there was one word in it, which, though often repeated, she could not distinctly make out; and that was the word *id-ea*, but she supposed it came from a Greek derivation."

"You are perfectly right, madam," said Foote, "it comes from the word *ideaousky*."

"And pray, sir, what does that mean?"

"The *feminine of idiot*, madam!"

ASKED if a child was not "the image of its father," who was a very weak charactered man, Foote replied that he did not know, but there was certainly *a great deal of the child* in the father.

WHEN Sir Francis Delaval introduced his lady (a ninety-thousand pounder) into the gay world, he was much rallied by his acquaintance on the homeliness of her person; upon which Foote said, "that as *he* made the match, he must likewise make his friend's apology; which was, that he bought her by *weight*, and *paid nothing for the fashion*."

A PROPRIETOR of a declining newspaper being asked in company how much he *divided* yearly, and demurring to the question, Foote answered quietly, "Oh, sir, this is an *amicable* society; *they never divide upon any account.*"

FOOTE was as great a *bon-vivant* as wit, and there is a story of his visiting a friend in the city who was noted for his good dinners. He arrived as luck would have it just as his friend and his wife were about to dine. It so happened that, owing to a mischance in the kitchen, there was nothing more than a tureen of soup and a neck of mutton.

Accustomed to find great variety at his friend's table, Foote on being asked to have some soup, replied, "No—I'll wait for something else."

To the soup succeeded the mutton, and the hungry visitor to a similar question returned a like answer.

The deception could be kept up no longer, and

accordingly the lady of the house, with a thousand apologies for it, told him of the accident.

"Here, madam," cried Foote, interrupting the lady with infinite good humour, "what, are we then come to short allowance? Then here, John, not so fast, bring back the mutton; for egad! I find it is now neck or nothing with us."

MRS MACAULAY having published a pamphlet called *Loose Thoughts*, some ladies, who happened to be in company with Foote, deprecated the use of the title as very improper for a woman.

"Not at all, ladies," said Foote, "the sooner a woman gets rid of such thoughts the better."

WHEN Foote parted with the patent of the Haymarket Theatre to Colman, he got himself engaged at the same time as a principal performer. In negotiation some difficulty arose over the value of the comedy of *The Lame Lover*, Colman observing that it would not bring so much as the other pieces.

"Yes, yes," said Foote, "it will; for though he is nominally lame, there will always be a Foote for his support."

AN artist friend of Foote's was eternally complaining of illness, but could never tell what was the matter with him. At length he married, on hearing which Foote remarked, "I heartily wish him joy; for now he'll readily find out what's the matter with him."

THE same artist, meeting the wit some time afterwards, exclaimed, "Well, Foote, you have been premature about my finding out my disorder, as I have got the *best* wife in the world."

"I am sorry for that, my dear friend," answered he, "for you know the old proverb, *bad is the best.*"

FOLLOWING a man in the street who did not bear the best of characters, Foote slapped him familiarly on the shoulder, mistaking him for a familiar friend. Discovering his mistake, he apologised, "Oh, sir! I beg your pardon, I really took you for a gentleman who—"

"Well, sir," interrupted the other, "and am I not a *gentleman?*"

"Nay, sir," said Foote, "and if you take it up in that way, I must only beg your pardon a *second time.*"

BARON NEWMAN, a celebrated gambler of the time (known as the *left-handed Baron**), being detected in the rooms at Bath in the act of secreting a card, the company, in their indignation, threw him out of the window of the one-pair-of-stairs room where they were playing.

The Baron, meeting Foote shortly afterwards, loudly complained of the usage to which he had been subjected, and asked him what he should do to repair his injured honour.

"Do!" said the wit, "why, 'tis a plain case; never play *so high* again so long as you live."

THE loss of his leg Foote bore with wonderful good humour, and made much merriment over it, saying he had now no fear of corns, sores or kibed heels; that he would not change his one good leg with Lord Spindle's two drumsticks; and though, to be sure, he might find himself a little awkward at running, yet he would hop with any man in England.

* The reason for this nickname was that, having on one occasion concealed a card under his left hand at *piquet*, his antagonist, perceiving the cheat, thrust a fork through the hand and nailed it to the table, palpably convicting the Baron of his fraud.

WHEN at school, having been set some task, Foote once came up to the master, a pompous pedant, with his exercise in one hand and a huge dictionary under his arm, presenting himself for examination with gravity and submission amounting to grotesqueness.

Being received with the usual "Well, sir, what do you want?" he replied, "Sir, I am come to do away the imposition laid upon me."

"What do you mean by *imposition?* I would have you know, sir, I impose upon nobody."

"I am sure then, sir," answered Foote, "if you did not *impose* this duty upon me, I never should have taken a natural fancy to it."

FOOTE was met by a friend in town with a young man who was flashing away very brilliantly, while Foote seemed grave.

"Why, Foote," said the friend, "you are flat to-day; you don't seem to relish a joke!"

"You have not *tried me* yet, sir," retorted the wit.

GARRICK'S verse was so bad said Foote that he dreaded dying before him, for fear that "Davie" should have the composing of his epitaph.

A GENTLEMAN praising the personal charms of a very plain woman before Foote, the latter whispered to him, "And why don't you lay claim to such an accomplished beauty?"

"What right have I to her?" asked the other.

"Every right, by the law of all nations, as *the first discoverer*."

THE difference between an Irishman and a Scotchman in relishing a joke, is, according to Foote, that the former laughs too soon, and the other too late; it being no uncommon thing for a Scotchman to be one hour in finding out the jest, and a second in rousing up his faculties to enjoy it.

THE Lying Valet being, one hot night, annexed as an afterpiece to the comedy of *The Devil upon Two Sticks*, Garrick coming into the green-room at the Haymarket, called out exultantly to Foote, "Well, Sam, I see, after all, you are glad to take up with one of *my* farces."

"Why, yes, David," rejoined the ready wit, "what could I do better? I must have some ventilator for this hot weather."

FOOTE happening to spend the evening with two dignitaries of the Church, the conversation turned upon some point of polemical divinity, which the two churchmen took up on different grounds with great vehemence and strength of argument. Foote, during the contest, took no other share in the debate than in recruiting their spirits, by constantly keeping their glasses filled. At length one of them turned to him and begged that as he could be at times as argumentative as witty, he would step in as arbitrator of their differences.

"I thank you kindly, gentlemen," said Foote very gravely, "but I have always made it a rule never to interfere in *family affairs.*"

WHEN an inferior actor at the Haymarket once took off David Garrick, Foote limped from the boxes to the green-room, and severely rated him for his impudence.

"Why, sir," said the offender, "you take him off every day, and why may not I?"

"Because," replied the satirist, "*you are not qualified to kill game, and I am.*"

AFTER one of his trips to the Emerald Isle Foote was praising the hospitality of the Irish, when a gentleman asked him whether he had been at *Cork*.

"No, sir," answered Foote, "but I have seen many *drawings* of it."

HE having satirised the Scotch pretty severely, a gentleman asked Foote why he hated that nation so much.

"You are mistaken," answered he, "I don't hate the Scotch, neither do I hate frogs; but I would have everything *keep to its native element*."

FOOTE, on being asked why learned men are to be found in rich men's houses, and rich men never to be seen in those of the learned, answered—"The *first* know what they want, but the *latter* do not."

AS a theatrical novelty, Foote declared his intention to announce for representation at the Haymarket Theatre *The Fair Penitent* to be performed, for one night only, by *a black lady of great accomplishments*.

FOOTE'S mother being in monetary difficulties, wrote to her son, "Dear Sam, I am in prison." With equal brevity he replied, "Dear mother, so am I."

WHEN Foote was one day lamenting his growing old, a pert young fellow asked him what he would give to be as young as he.

"I would be content," answered Foote, "to be as *foolish*."

FOOTE being in company, and the wine producing more riot than concord, he observed one gentleman so far gone in debate as to throw the bottle at his antagonist's head, upon which, catching the missile in his hand, he restored the harmony of the company by observing, that "if *the bottle was passed so quickly*, not one of them would be able to stand out the evening."

A FRIEND in company with Foote at a coffee-house took up a newspaper, saying, "He wanted to see what the Ministry were about."

"Look among the robberies," said Foote, with a smile.

FOOTE was fond of repeating the following story of his first visit to Scotland :—He was inquiring of an old Highlander, who had formerly been prompter to the Edinburgh Theatre, about the state of the country with respect to travelling, living, manners, &c., of all which the Scot gave him very favourable accounts.

"Why then," said Foote, "with about £300 a year one may live like a gentleman in your country."

"In truth, Master Foote, I cannot tell that, for as I never knew a man there who spent half that sum, I don't know what may come into his head who would attempt *to squander the whole.*"

HAVING dined at an inn at Salthill, Foote asked for the bill. It was produced, and the wit thinking it exorbitant, called for the host and began by asking his name.

"Partridge, and please you," replied the boniface.

"Partridge!" echoed Foote, "it should be woodcock by the length of your bill."

SHORTLY after Foote had fitted up his Fulham house, a friend came to see him, and was duly taken all over the premises. Foote then inquired how he liked it, and the friend replied that it "was very neat, and handsomely furnished; but at the same time, that there was not a room fit to swing a cat in."

"Sir, I do not wish to swing cats in it," replied Foote.

AN artist named Forfeit having some job to do for Foote, got into a foolish scrape about *the antiquity of family* with another artist, who gave him such a drubbing as confined him to his bed for a considerable time.

"Forfeit! Forfeit!" said Foote, "why surely you have the best of the argument; your family is not only *several thousand years old*, but at the same time the *most numerous* of any on the face of the globe, on the authority of Shakespeare—

"'All the souls that are, were *Forfeit* once!'"

BEING asked what he thought of Sir Basil Keith's appointment to the governorship of Jamaica, Foote exclaimed—

"What do I think? I think that the Irish *take us all in* and the Scots *turn us all out*."

A CONCEITED young man asked Foote what apology he should make for not being one of a party the day before, to which he had been invited.

"Oh, my dear sir," replied the wit, "say nothing about it, you were not *missed*."

A PHYSICIAN at Bath told Foote that he was thinking of publishing his poems, but had so many irons in the fire that he didn't quite know what to do.

"Take my advice," said Foote.

"What is that?" asked the medico.

"Put your poems into the fire, with *the rest of your irons*."

WHEN Foote was in Ireland he happened to see at the Castle one *levée* day a person in the suite of the Lord Lieutenant whom he thought he had known for many years to have lived rather a life of *expediency* in London. To corroborate his suspicion, he asked Lord Townsend who he was.

"That is one of my gentlemen at large," answered his Excellency, "do you know him?"

"Oh yes," said Foote, "very well; and what you tell me of him is very extraordinary; first that he is a *gentleman*, and next that he is *at large*."

MRS REDDISH had been playing the Queen in *Richard III.* one night at Drury Lane Theatre. She was a woman of a coarse masculine build. A gentleman who sat next Foote asked her name, and on hearing it, repeated, "Reddish, Reddish!" as though trying to recollect her.

"Ay, sir," added the wit, "*horse Reddish.*"

FOOTE went once to spend Christmas with a friend in the country, when the weather being very cold, and but bad fires in the house owing to the scarcity of wood, Foote determined to make his stay as short as possible. Accordingly, on the third day of his visit he ordered his chaise, and was preparing to set out for town.

His friend noticing his preparations, asked him what hurry he was in, and pressed him to stay.

"No, no," said Foote, "was I to stay any longer, you would not let me *have a leg to stand on.*"

"Why, surely," said his friend, "we do not drink so hard."

"No, but there is so little wood in your house, that I am afraid one of your servants may light the fires some morning with *my right leg.*"

ON being complimented on a beautiful pair of carriage horses one day, Foote replied, "Yes, I am never without a *set of duns* in my retinue; but with this difference, that in the summer I drive the duns, and in the winter the duns drive me."

SITTING in a coffee-room one day, and a dog being very troublesome, Foote bade the waiter kick him out. The waiter having failed to do so, and the dog still pestering him, Foote said if the waiter didn't kick the dog out, he would kick him out.

"Sir," said an obtrusive young coxcomb, "I perceive you are not fond of dogs."

"No," answered Foote, "nor of puppies either."

FOOTE being one day at a coffee-house, and seeing a gentleman of whom he had but a slight knowledge, took the opportunity after some long conversation to beg the gentleman would be so obliging as to lend him five guineas, as he was much distressed for that sum. The gentleman replied, "I don't know you."

"That was the only reason for my request," said Foote, "for if you did know me, I'm sure you would not."

WHEN Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son* first came out, a gentleman asked Foote whether they did not contain great knowledge of the world.

"Oh yes, sir," answered he, "very much so; for they inculcate bad *morals*—and the *manners* of a dancing master."

FOOTE frequently attended Macklin's lectures with, it is to be feared, the main object of making fun out of the speaker. On one occasion the subject Macklin was discussing at somewhat inordinate length was "Duelling in Ireland." The people were manifestly getting tired, and the lecturer had only got then so far as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when Foote intimated that he wished to ask a question.

"Well, sir," said Macklin, "what have you to say on this subject?"

"I think, sir," said Foote, "this matter might be settled in a few words. What o'clock is it, sir?"

Macklin could not possibly see what the clock had to do with a dissertation on duelling,

but gruffly answered that the hour was half-past nine.

"Very well, sir," said Foote, "about this time of the night every gentleman in Ireland that can possibly be is in his third bottle of claret, and therefore in a fair way of getting drunk; and from drunkenness proceeds quarrelling, and from quarrelling duelling, and so there's an end to the chapter."

FOOTE being at supper one night at the Bedford coffee-house just after Garrick had performed Macbeth, the conversation very naturally turned on the merits of that great performer. After many eulogiums had been passed, it was generally allowed that he was the greatest actor on the stage.

"Indeed, gentlemen," said Foote, "I do not think you have said above *half* enough of him; for I think him not only the greatest actor *on*, but also the greatest actor *off* the stage."

AN Irish fortune-hunter at Bath told Foote that he had got an excellent phaeton on a new plan.

"I am rather of opinion," answered Foote, "that you have got it on the old plan; for I suspect you never intend to pay for it."

SOON after Savigny (who had been a cutler) appeared at Covent Garden Theatre in *Barbarossa*, Lady Harrington observed to Foote that he was really very *cutting*.

"Oh! dear madam," answered Foote, "I am not much surprised at that,—consider, he is a *razor grinder*."

A CERTAIN baronet who was very vain of his title had in early life practised as a physician in the West Indies. Foote accosted him one day as Doctor Grant, and repeatedly used the title Doctor in his conversation. At length the baronet's patience was exhausted, and he exclaimed warmly, "I am no doctor."

"No, faith!" replied Foote readily, "*nor ever were*."

THE Duke of Cumberland was dining with Foote when a Mr Reynolds was of the company.

"So, Mr Reynolds," said the duke, "I find you are intimate with Mr Wilkes. Pray, what time does he go to bed? what time does he rise?"

Several equally important questions followed, when Foote broke in, saying, "Your highness will please to remember that Mr Reynolds is Wilkes's *attorney*, not his *chamberlain*."

A RAGGED fellow was boasting of the antiquity of his family and of what arms they bore.

"Very likely you may have a coat of arms," said Foote, "but I see you have hardly got arms to your coat."

FOOTE was one day asked how it happened that the highest places and more remarkable

appointments were not given by Government to persons who excelled in knowledge and judgment; but commonly to those who are deficient in those points. He replied, somewhat drily, "It is an established custom, which promises never to be forgotten, to lay the heaviest loads on asses, not men."

WHEN Doctor Arne produced an opera, *The Rose*, at Covent Garden Theatre, it was hissed off the stage the first night. Foote, on leaving the theatre, was asked by an acquaintance what he thought of it.

"Well, bating the *piety* of it, I must confess I never saw a piece so justly damned in my life."

A LADY'S age happening to be questioned, she affirmed that she was but forty, and turning to Foote asked, "Sir, do you believe I am right when I say I am but forty?"

"I am sure, madam," answered Foote, "I ought not to dispute it; for I have constantly heard you say so for above ten years."

FOOTE, seeing an Irish gentleman superbly dressed just after he had taken the benefit of the Insolvent Act, said, "Throw an Irishman into the Thames, naked at low water, and he will come up with the tide at Westminster Bridge, with a laced coat and a sword on."

ON being gravely asked by a politician what he thought of the three Georges, Foote replied, "George the Wise, George the Prudent, and George the Unfortunate—But George, *the best of the Bunch*, what *my own* George (his son) will be old Daddy Time must develop."

ON his way to pay his respects at St James's Palace Foote was offered a place by "a lady of quality" in her carriage.

"Excuse me, madam," answered he, "I did not come to court for a *place*."

FOOTE one day told a miser that he must be exceedingly happy in being free from two dreadful plagues that tormented many thousands.

"What plagues are these?" asked the sordid one.

"Why a *smoky house* and a *scolding wife*," answered the wit; "for the dread of matrimonial expenses hath kept you unmarried, and your antipathy to the dressing of food renders fires in your house unnecessary."

FOOTE and some friends were invited by a notorious old miserly man to see his statue, which he had just had done in marble. Foote, on being asked if he thought it like the original, answered meaningly, "Oh, yes, very like—*body and soul*, egad!"

AN inhabitant of Bristol dining one day with Foote, expatiated so loudly and so long upon the beauties of that city that the wit became soon tired of his companion. Among other things, the Bristolian remarked that in the city of Bristol there was a prodigious number of hogs.

"I'm sensible of that," said Foote, "but the worst of it is, that to *kill 'em* is death by the law."

FOOTE wrote a pamphlet history of the murder of one of his uncles by another, and it is said that on the day on which he took the manuscript to the bookseller in the Old Bailey, such was his need that he was obliged to wear his boots without stockings, and, on his receiving his ten pounds, he purchased a pair at a hosier's in Fleet Street. On coming out of the shop he was recognised by two of his University associates, who bore him off to dinner at the Bedford coffee-house. As the wine passed round the state of Foote's wardrobe came within view, and he was asked what the deuce had become of his stockings.

"Why," answered Foote, quite unembarrassed, "I never wear any at this time of the year, till I dress for the evening; and, you see," pulling his purchase out of his pocket, and silencing the laugh of his friends, "I am always provided with a pair for the occasion."

A GENTLEMAN recently married told Foote he had that morning laid out three thousand pounds in jewels for his *dear wife*.

"Faith, sir," said Foote, "I see you are no hypocrite, for she is truly your *dear* wife."

WHEN told that he would die "by inches," Foote merely said he was thankful that he was not a tall man.

ONE of the admirals, after the first day of a grand naval review at Portsmouth, asked Foote if the profusion of fire and smoke did not give him an idea of hell.

"Yes, indeed it did," replied the wit, "especially when I observed your lordship in the midst of it."

"AN able magistrate," according to Foote, "should have all the properties of a thorough-bred hound; should be a good finder, a staunch pursuer, and a keen killer; for the great duty of a judge is to punish, and he is never so well *pleased* as when *doing his duty*."

FOOTE was standing one day, in a pensive attitude, in the kitchen garden of Carlton House, when he was observed by a gentleman at a window, who immediately said to Parson Foote (the wit's brother), "What the devil is Sam doing yonder among the cabbages?"

"Let 's go and see," said the parson. Accordingly, these two gentlemen with some ladies went out to the garden where the wit stood.

"What are you doing there, Mr Foote?" asked one of the ladies.

"Why, madam," replied he, "I 'm in raptures!"

"In raptures!" said the lady, "with what?"

"With a cabbage stalk," added Foote, and immediately began the following dissertation upon it:—

"A cabbage stalk, ladies and gentlemen; what shall I say of a cabbage stalk? The first part of it to be considered is the root; for, without the root, nothing can be said on the matter. Well, then, the root!—observe the root, ladies. See the numerous filaments by which it receives its nurture. Were ye, ladies, but as deeply rooted in love, your fruits might be as answerable. But, to speak in general terms, were we but as deeply rooted in mutual friendship, our fruits would be as estimable. But, on the contrary, we had rather vegetate in a vicious soil, and on avarice, which is the

root of all evil, and graft the whole fraternity of vices.

"There is another reason, ladies and gentlemen, why I begin with the root of this cabbage; because it represents the exordium of a discourse; the stock is the ratiocination, or argumentative part, and the head is the conclusion.

"The root of this cabbage I shall compare

to the King—because, you see, as all power and honour are derived ultimately from His Majesty, so the stalk and head of this same cabbage derive as ultimately their existence from the root. And, d'ye see, as this stalk and this head are reciprocally an honour to the root,—so His Majesty is indebted to his subjects for his wealth, his power, and his magnificence.

"The root, I say, is the King;—and the stalk, then, shall be the nobility and gentry.—And, let me see, what shall be the head of the cabbage?—Why, the common people;—ay, the common people are the head of the nation.

"Hey?—what?—Ay!—I 'm right in my logic, surely.—This cabbage stalk is hollow; and how many human cabbage stalks are there in this vast garden, the world—Hey? How may hypocrites?—This stalk was once of a lovely green, and full of sap, but now dried and withered.—And what is the fate of man but that of a cab-

bage stalk?—Nay, my little preaching puppy of a brother here, who stands by me, must, if he wishes to display his oratorical powers, actually imagine that his hearers are all cabbage stalks! It will be then that soft persuasion, like Hyblean honey, will flow from his lips; then that the blaze of eloquence will warm his audience;—then—but, by Jupiter, 'tis dinner time—my reflections are over—so there is an end of my dissertation on a cabbage stalk."

FOOTE, riding in Hyde Park, met the Duke of Cumberland, who accosted him with "Well, Foote, have you anything *new* to-day?"

"Yes, and please your highness (clapping his hand on his knee) a *pair of buckskin breeches.*"

A YOUNG gentleman making an apology to his father for coming in late to dinner, said, "that he had been visiting a poor friend of his in St George's Fields."

"A pretty kind of friend, indeed," said the father, "to keep us waiting in this manner."

"Ay, and of the best kind, too," said Foote; "as you know, my dear sir, *a friend in need is a friend indeed.*"

MR DAVENPORT, a tailor who had acquired a large fortune, asked Foote for a motto for his coach.

"Latin or English?" asked the wit.

"Poh! English to be sure,—I don't want to set up for a scholar."

"Then I've got one from *Hamlet* that will match you to a button-hole—'*List! list! oh, list!*'"

TALKING of Garrick, Foote said that he always remembered Davy living in Durham Yard, with three quarts of vinegar in the cellar, and calling himself a wine merchant.

FOOTE being annoyed by a poor fiddler straining harsh discord under his window, sent him out a shilling with a request that he would play elsewhere, as *one scraper at the door* was sufficient.

ONE of the actors coming up to Foote in the green-room with a long face, said he had just heard that Doctor Kenrick was going to give a public critique on his last new comedy of *The Cozeners* at Marybone Gardens.

"Is he so?" said Foote. "Well, let the Doctor take care of the fate of our first parents, a *fall in the garden*."

SOMEONE speaking of a very formal man, said in his defence that, "notwithstanding his stiffness there were times when he could be very familiar."

"Yes," said Foote, "but then it is a *full dress familiarity*."

AN officer, a notorious gambler, said to Foote, "Since I last saw you, I have *lost* an eye."

"I am sorry for it," said Foote; "pray *at what game?*"

SAID a lady to Foote, "I hear that you can make a pun on any subject; make one on the King."

"Madam," he immediately replied, "the King is no subject."

FOOTE and Garrick being at a tavern together at the time of the first regulation of the gold coin, the former pulling out his purse to pay the reckoning, asked his friend "what he should do with a light guinea he had?"

"Pshaw! 'tis worth nothing," said Garrick, "fling it to the devil."

"Well, David," said Foote, "you are what I always took you for, ever contriving to make a guinea go farther than any other man."

BEING asked to translate a physician's motto, which was, "*A numine salus*," Foote quickly replied, "*God help the patient!*"

AT a nobleman's house, as soon as dinner was over, his lordship ordered a bottle of Cape wine to be set on the table. After magnifying its good qualities, and in particular its age, he sent it round the table in glasses that scarcely held a thimbleful.

"Fine wine, upon my soul," said Foote, tasting, and smacking his lips.

"Is it not very curious?" said his lordship.

"Perfectly so," answered Foote, "indeed, I do not remember to have seen anything *so little of its age* in my life before."

FOOTE was about to take a boat at Whitehall stairs when he asked the boatmen, "Who can swim?"

"I, master," shouted forty of the men, while one went slinking away. Foote called after him, but the fellow, turning around, said, "Sir, I cannot swim."

"Then you are my man," said the wit, "for you will at least take care of me for your own sake."

ONE day Foote was taken into Foote's coffee house by a friend who wished to write a note. The wit, standing in a room among strangers, did not seem quite at his ease, so Lord Carmarthen, wishing to relieve his embarrassment, came up to speak to him. But Carmarthen himself feeling a little shy of addressing a man whom he hardly knew, merely stammered out, "Mr Foote, your handkerchief is hanging out of your pocket."

Upon which Foote looked suspiciously round, thrust the handkerchief back in his pocket, and replied, "Thank you, my Lord, you know the company so much better than I do."

FOOTE when a boy was chided by an elderly lady ("with a remarkably red carbuncle face") for some fault. He denied it, but coloured at the accusation.

"Nay," said the lady, "I am sure it must be true, for you blush."

"Pardon me, madam," said he, "that is only the reflection of your face."

A SPENDTHRIFT being sold up, Foote, who attended the sale every day, bought nothing but a pillow, on which he was asked, "What particular use he could have for a single pillow?"

"Why," said he, "I do not sleep very well at night, and I am sure that this must give me many a good nap, when the proprietor of it—though *he owed so much*—could sleep upon it."

A LADY having observed in the hearing of Foote that the King had round shoulders, "No wonder, madam," said he, "for His Majesty, you know, has the burthen of three kingdoms on them."

SOMEONE asking Foote what had become of Dr Johnson, he replied that he had been for some time a *rambler*, he next turned *idler*, and at last dwindled into a spreader of *false alarms*.

A CLERGYMAN, "a very dirty fellow," was boasting in Foote's company of his agricultural labours.

"Oh, it 's easy to see that, sir," said Foote; "you keep your glebe in your own hands."

SAID the one-legged Sam Foote to a person who rallied him on his wooden limb—"Why do you attack me on my weakest part? Did I ever say anything against your head?"

SOME one told Foote that the Rockingham Ministry were at their wits' end, and quite tired out. "It could not have been with the journey," he said.

A PLAYER once complaining to Foote that his wife's drunkenness and ill-conduct had almost ruined him, concluded with a phrase he was in the habit of using, "and for goodness' sake, sir, what is to be said for it?"

"Nothing that I know," said Foote, "can be said *for it*; but a devilish deal may be said *against it*."

ON his return from Scotland, a lady enquired of Foote if there were any truth in the report of there being no trees in that country. He replied, somewhat maliciously:—"No, indeed; for, when crossing from Port Patrick to Donaghadee, I saw two blackbirds perched on as fine a *thistle* as ever I beheld."

A LADY had been discussing some religious question with Foote, and suddenly turning on him, asked, "Pray, Mr Foote, do you ever go to church?"

"No, madam," answered he, "not that I see any harm in it."

WHEN Foote, in bad health, was on his way to France for change of air, he went into the kitchen at the inn at Dover to order a particular dish which he fancied for dinner. The true English cook boasted that she had never set foot out of the country.

"Why, cookey, that 's very extraordinary," said Foote, "as they tell me upstairs that you have been several times *all over grease!*"

"They may tell you what they please, above or below stairs," replied the cook, "but I was never ten miles from Dover in my life!"

"Nay, now that *must* be a fib," said Foote; "for I have myself seen you at *Spit-head!*"

The next day (October 21, 1777) the wit died.

"HERE have I," said Foote, dining with Sir Francis Delaval, "been seven days together dining with him on a greasy loin of pork. What he can have meant by it I don't know; except he means to run his pork against *The Beggars' Opera*."

"What, Foote!" exclaimed Sir Francis, "at my loin of pork still?"

"No," retorted he, unabashed, "your loins of pork have been *at me*, and if you don't *take them off*, in another week I suppose I shall be as full of bristles as Peter the wild man."

FOOTE, according to Dibdin, had a most contemptible opinion of Garrick's literary abilities. He once received an anonymous letter which pointed out to him a certain play as an excellent subject for his theatre. He mentioned the circumstance to a nobleman who happened to be that evening behind the scenes; adding that he should be particularly happy to know the author, as it was incomparably written; for among other traits there were many quotations that spoke a perfect knowledge of the Grecian and Roman theatres, and much sound classical reading.

"I think I can guess at him," said his lordship.

"Can you, my lord," said Foote, "I wish I could."

"What do you think of Garrick?"

"Oh, no, my lord," answered the wit, "I am sure it is not Garrick."

"Why?" returned his lordship.

"I shall answer you," said Foote, "like Scrub. First, then, I am sure it is not Garrick because there is Greek in it; secondly, I am sure it is not Garrick because there is Latin in it; and thirdly, I am sure it is not Garrick because there is *English* in it."

WHILE at Edinburgh, Foote was urged to give an example of his powers of mimicry by taking off Wilkes, who was at that time as obnoxious in Scotland as he was popular in England.

"No, thank you," answered the wit, "for I intend to take myself off to London in a few days, and do not desire to sup on *brickbats and rotten eggs* on the first night of my arrival in the metropolis."

HAVING been in company with a certain celebrated baronet from the Principality, who was remarkably corpulent, Foote was asked what he thought of him.

"Oh! a true Welshman," said he, "all *mountainous and barren*."

WHEN it was announced that Foote was about to open the Haymarket Theatre, he said that he was applied to by all kinds of persons anxious to try their fortunes on the stage, and wishing him to give them engagements. One lady who waited upon him he catechised thus—

"Pray, madam, are you for tragedy or comedy?"

No answer.

"Are you a veteran, or is it your first attempt?"

Still no reply.

"H'm! are you married, madam?"

At length, says Foote, she spoke—"Pray, sir, speak a little louder, *for I am deaf!*"

BEING asked by a talkative barber how he would be shaved, Foote promptly replied, "In silence."

GARRICK so delighted in flattery, according to Foote, that though you crammed him with a dose of it large as St Paul's, he would be instantly ready to swallow another big as the Monument.

THE rubicund-faced Lord Kellie came into a gathering where Foote was present, on a hot summer night, dressed in a somewhat tarnished suit of laced clothes. The servant announced "Lord Kellie!"

"Lord Kellie!" repeated Foote, looking him full in the face at the same time, "I thought it was *all Monmouth Street in flames.*"

FOOTE was intended for one of the large party who witnessed the performance of some noble amateurs, of whom Sir Francis Delaval was the chief, who brought out *Othello* at Garrick's Theatre. The wit, however, either from accident or design, did not attend until the play was finished, and then entered the great green-room as the company were taking refreshments.

"Oh! Foote, where have you been? What you have lost! such a play you'll never have another opportunity of seeing!" was the general buzz from one end of the room to the other. To all this the wit bowed contrition, disappointment, and so forth; when slily approaching the place where Garrick sat, he asked him, in a whisper loud enough to be heard by the whole company, "What he *seriously* thought of it?"

"Think of it," said Garrick, equally wishful

to be heard, "why, that I never *suffered* so much in my whole life!"

"What! *for the author?* I thought so. Alas! poor Shakespeare!"

The company not being prepared for this stroke, the laugh was unanimous against Garrick; which Sir Francis joined in with as much good humour as if he was not at all affected by the sarcasm.

A DULL dramatic writer, who had often felt the severity of the public, was complaining one day to Foote of the injustice done him by the critics; "I have, however," he added, "one way of being even with them; which is by constantly laughing at all they say against me."

"You do perfectly right, my friend," said Foote, "for by this method you will not only disappoint your enemies, but lead the *merriest life* of any man in England."

WHEN he was dining with a friend at Merchant Taylors' Hall, on one occasion, Foote enjoyed himself so thoroughly that he sat until the company were much thinned. Suddenly he rose, and with great gravity took leave by saying, "Gentlemen, I wish you *both* good-night."

"Both!" echoed one of the company; "why Foote, are you drunk? here are nearly a score of us left!"

"Oh! yes," said the wit, "I know that,—there are just eighteen; but as nine tailors only make a man, I wish to be correct; therefore, as I said before, gentlemen, I wish you *both* good-night."

A YOUNG member of Parliament having made a long *declamatory* speech, his uncle asked Foote "how he liked it? and whether he did not think posterity would speak well of it?"

"Oh, no doubt, no doubt," said he, wishing to get rid of the subject.

"Well," continued the other pertinaciously, "but what do you think they will say?"

"Will say?" returned Foote, pausing, "why, they must say, if they do the young gentleman justice, that he *once flourished in Parliament*."

TALKING of Irish bulls, Foote suggested a happy one when he supposed that "Phelim O'Flanagan for the *murder of his wife* was found guilty of *manslaughter*.

IT being observed by a lady how much better one of their acquaintance, who had been raised from a humble situation, looked than she did a dozen years before,

"Very true," said Foote, "but consider the *education of her face* since that time."

HAVING been asked his opinion of Churchill, the poet, Foote immediately said that Lilly, the grammarian, had already given his character in one line with great accuracy—

"Bifrons, atque custos; bos, fur, sus, atque sacerdos."

A WRITER was boasting that as reviewer, he had the power of distributing literary reputation as he liked.

"Take care,' said Foote to him warningly, "take care you are not too prodigal of that, or you *may leave none* for yourself."

HUGH KELLY (the author of *False Delicacy*, &c.) was dining with Foote one day, and being surprised at the smallness of his library, exclaimed, "Why, hey day! I have got almost as many books myself."

'Perhaps you have, sir," retorted Foote, "But consider, you *read* all that you *write*."

A WELL-KNOWN epicure having bought a library, someone was saying that they wondered what he could do with it, as he was well-known to prefer a *good table* to all the books in the world.

"It may be for that reason he has bought them," said Foote, "for the *table of Contents.*"

SOME one of his acquaintance was telling Foote that he had just purchased a house which he thought a good bargain, though he doubted, from its being so old, whether it would stand out the lease.

"What sort of next door neighbours have you?" demanded the wit.

"Why, what have my next door neighbours to do with my house?"

"More than you seem aware of; for by your own account, a great deal of your safety depends upon their being good house-*holders.*"

FOOTE, as many stories show, lost no opportunity of making fun out of Garrick's parsimony. After rehearsals, when he was the delight of the green-room for the sallies of his wit and humour, he would frequently say, "Bless me! here we have been laughing away our time, and 'tis now past four o'clock

without ever thinking of dinner. Garrick, have you enough for a *third*, without infringing on your servants' generosity—as I know they are all upon board wages?"

Garrick, rather embarrassed, would say, "Why, hey, now, Sam ; if, if you are really serious, and not engaged, and would finish our laugh in Southampton Street, I dare say Mrs Garrick would find a chair for you."

"Oh ! don't let me break in upon her generosity. If the kitchen fire *should* be out, or this is a cold-meat day, or one of her fast days, I can pop into a coffee-house ; though, I must confess, the want of Mrs Garrick's company must make every place a desert."

Garrick generally forced a laugh upon these occasions, but was always glad to purchase a truce at the expense of a dinner.

PREVIOUSLY to Foote's bringing out his *Primitive Puppet Show* at the Haymarket Theatre, he enjoined all his performers, car-

penters, scene-shifters and others, to keep it a profound secret; only to insinuate that something was in preparation that would much surprise the town from its novelty.

Garrick, among others, heard of this; and as he was always "tremblingly alive" to everything that might operate against his fame and profits, he took several circuitous ways to find out the nature of the design, but in vain. Foote kept him on the torture of expectation for some time; till, being very nearly ready for exhibition, he determined to have the laugh against him, once for all. He accordingly intimated "that if he would dine with him on such a day, he should be let into the secret."

Garrick readily obeyed the summons, and a convivial party was likewise gathered together by Foote to share in the merriment of the plot. After dinner, Foote said very gravely, "that the secret he had hitherto kept so very profound was, a performer he had to introduce of such rare and singular talents, that except *himself*," bowing to Garrick, "he did not believe there was a man of near such merit on any theatre in Europe."

"Eh, eh!" said Garrick, much confused, "where does he come from? what is his name?"

"*Birch*," said the other, "a very near relation of your old friend Dr Birch. He's now in the next room. Will you have a specimen of his abilities?"

"Why, hey, now, if I did not think it would dash the young man's spirits, I, I should like it above all things."

"Oh! if that be all. Here, John, introduce the young gentleman, I 'll be answerable for his spirits; as you 'll find him to be bred in the true school of Socrates, and that he has learnt to consider his audience as so many cabbage stalks."

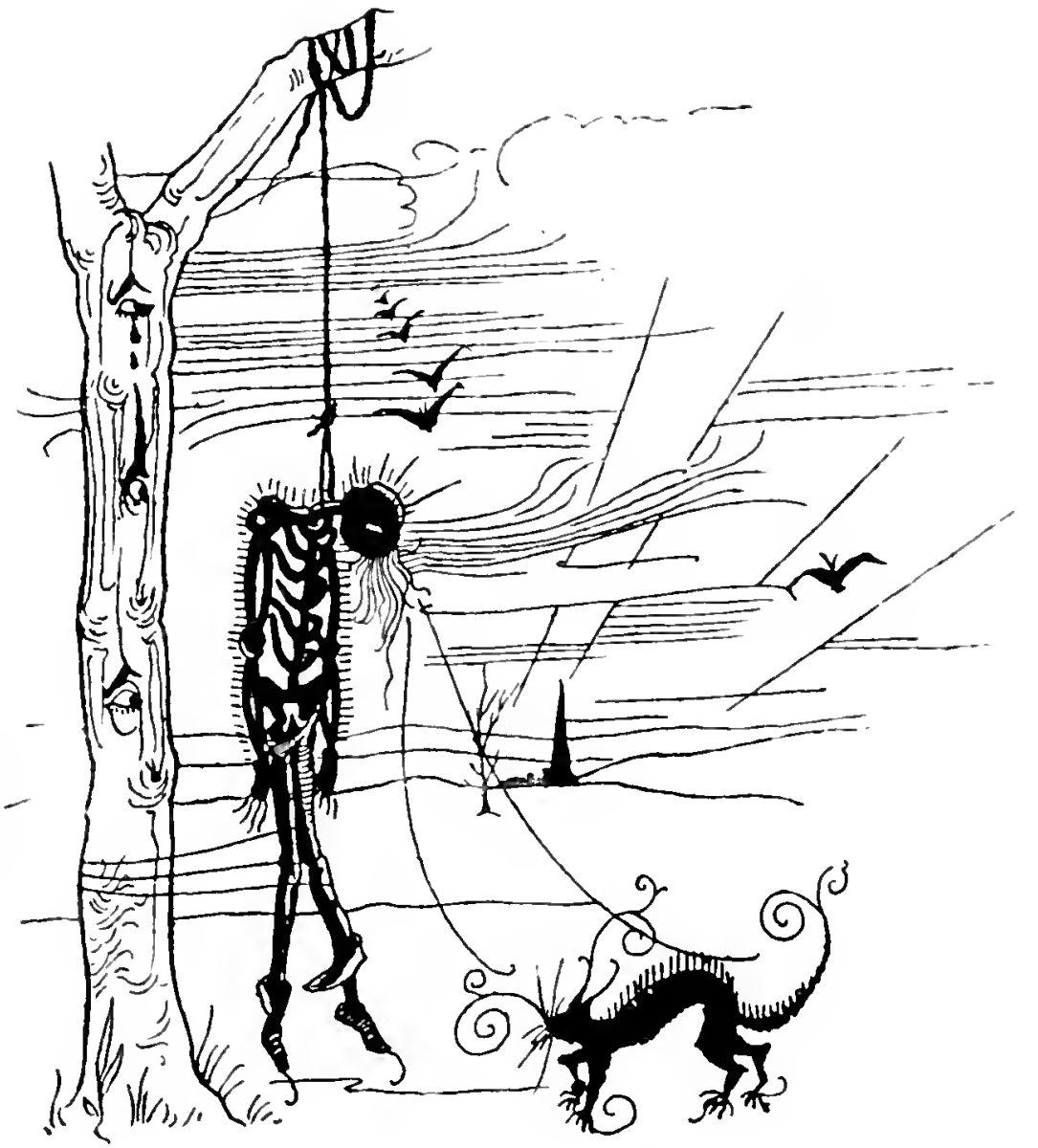
At this moment, John, who previously had his cue, introduced a large figure of Punch!

"Eh!" said Garrick, "what, now I understand. Oh! a puppet show! Well, but what is your hero to do? is he to be a mere comical fellow, or a mimic, or what?"

"Why, what the deuce, David, surely you are not already jealous of poor Punch? Come, John, part the *rivals*, or we shall have some noble blood spilt on the occasion."

Here the laugh was unanimously against Garrick; who was, however, very glad to be eased of his fears at the expense of a little ridicule.

A CLERGYMAN having taken exception to one of Foote's performances, "and by 'authority' too," the wit retorted that it was "by authority," for "a religion turned into a farce is, by the constitution of this country, the only species of the drama that may be exhibited for money without permission."



ON a further occasion, Foote said that "Garrick loved money so well, that should he ever retire from his profession, he would commence banker's clerk, for the mere pleasure of counting over the cash; and as for the stage, he was so fond of it, that rather than not play at all, he would act before the kitchen fire at the 'Shakespeare' for a sop in the pan.

FOOTE had a brother, a quiet clergyman, generally unbeneficed. Samuel allowed him sixty pounds a year and "the run of his house and theatre." This man, having nothing to do, was constantly gossiping in the green-room, where the Duke of Cumberland once observing him asked who he was.

"What, that little man in the shabby black coat just gone out?" said Foote. "Oh! that's my barber."

Some little time after by accident the Duke found out that instead of his barber he was his brother; and challenged him about it the first time he saw him.

"Why, what could I do with the fellow?" said Foote, "I could not say he was a *brother-wit;* and as I could not disclaim *all* relationship with him, I was obliged to make him out a *brother-shaver.*"

AN attorney of a very bad character having a dispute with a bailiff, the latter brought an action against him, which Foote recommended to be compromised. The parties at length agreed; but requested that in case of a difference in arbitration, they might be permitted to call upon him to decide.

"Oh! no," said Foote, "I may be partial to one or other of you—but I 'll do better, I 'll recommend a *thief* as *the common friend of both.*"

DR PAUL HIFFERMAN, an impecunious author, frequently attendant upon Foote, was one day relating some circumstance as a *fact;* and by way of corroboration, said he would pawn his soul upon it.

"Aye, that you may," said Foote, "and your *watch* too, Doctor, which *at present is of more value to you;* and yet I must question the veracity of what you tell me."

HIFFERMAN was fond of offering wagers. In the heat of argument one day he cried out, "I 'll lay my head you are wrong upon that point."

"Well," said Foote, "I accept the wager; *any trifle* among friends has a value."

FOOTE was walking about his own grounds at North End, one morning, with a friend, when they spied, dashing towards them on the Fulham Road, two persons in one of the very high phætons then recently in fashion.

"Is not that Moody," said he, "in that strange *three-pair-of-stairs* phæton?"

"Yes," said his friend, "and Johnson the stockbroker with him, and yet I wonder how he can leave his business, for I think this is no holiday."

"Why, no," said Foote, "I think not? except they choose to call this *ascension day*."

A YOUNG man of fashion was complaining to Foote that he had lost a large sum of money at the gaming table the night before; and, what was more extraordinary, that he lost it upon twelve casts of a die successively.

"Not at all extraordinary," said Foote, "Shakespeare has explained the cause many years ago—'The earth hath *bubbles*, as the water hath!'"

A WEALTHY city man dining one day at Foote's house, was every now and then boasting, with all the insolence of prosperity, of his many thousands in the funds, his capital in trade, mortgages, annuities, &c., when Foote cut him short by saying, "he was very sorry for the circumstance."

"What!" exclaimed the guest, "do you envy me my prosperity?"

"No, my good sir," said the other, "but you talk so much of your riches, I am afraid the company will think *you are going to break.*"

MR and Mrs Barry drew such crowds to the Opera House in the Haymarket one season, that the following one Foote engaged them to play in his little theatre. His friends expressed surprise that he should pay such high prices as they required for tragedy at his house.

"Why, to tell you the truth," he replied, "I have no great occasion for them; but they were such *bad neighbours* last year, that I find it cheaper to give them board and lodging for nothing, than to have them any longer *opposite to me.*"

FOOTE, who possessed all qualities of humour, would not always let truth stand in the way of his joke. One day, after dinner,

he apologised to his company for not giving them pine-apples in the dessert, "but," added he, "that confounded fellow of a next-door neighbour of mine comes over the garden-wall at night, and steals all my pines."

"What! my Lord B.'s brother?"

"Yes, no less a man, I assure you; and I have got his great toe in my man-trap at this instant."

"Oh! it is impossible," exclaimed the company, "you are surely *humming* us."

"Nay, I will convince you of it in a moment."

Here he called up the gardener; and turning to him with great gravity, asked him what he had done with the Honourable Mr B.'s great-toe.

"The toe, sir?" said the gardener, not being at first prepared for the question.

"Yes, the toe which you found in my man-trap this morning."

"Oh, yes, sir, the toe," catching the joke, "why to tell you, sir, I threw it out about an hour ago."

"You should not have done that," said one of the company, taking the story as a fact, "you should have kept it to expose him."

"No, no," said the wit, "'tis better as it is; consider how the keeping of such a *toe* must have disgraced a *Foote*."

FOOTE was calling upon a barrister friend who did not live happily with his wife; the servant maid, soon after his arrival, came into the room to look for her mistress.

"What do you want your mistress for?" enquired the barrister.

"Why, indeed, sir, to tell you the truth, she scolds me so from morning to night, I come to give her warning."

"What, then you mean to leave us?"

"Certainly, sir," said she.

"Happy girl!" exclaimed Foote, "I most sincerely wish your poor master *could give warning too.*"

ON the morning before Foote set out on his last journey to Dover, an old performer belonging to the Haymarket Theatre called to take leave of him.

"Well," said Foote, "what's the matter with you this morning, you look so ruefully?"

"Why, I don't know how it is, but I find I'm not *myself* to-day."

"No! then I heartily wish you joy; for though I don't know *who you are now*, you must certainly be a *gainer by the change.*"

A GENTLEMAN having lost his money at a faro-bank, where he suspected the *lady* of the house, communicated his suspicions to Foote, who comforted him by saying, "That he might depend upon it—it was all *fair* play."

"IF there be anything which Providence could be supposed to be ignorant of, it is the *event of a Chancery suit*."

A FARCE was defined by Foote as "a sort of hodge-podge dressed by a Gothic cook, where the mangled limbs of probability, common-sense, and decency are served up to gratify the voracious cravings of the most depraved appetites."

SOME Methodist preacher having written a pamphlet against Foote's piece called the *Minor*, concluded it with some verses describing a place where saints shall enjoy

> "Eternal rest, an active, blissful state,
> Joys ever new, transporting ever great."

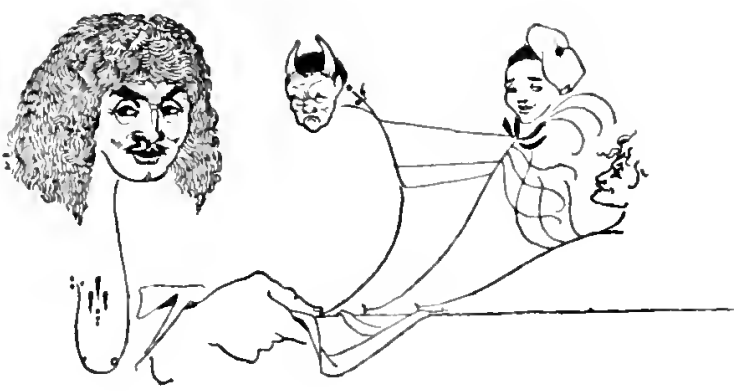
"I hope, sir," said Foote, "in this paradise of your own manufacture, you will allow your saints, after their '*active rest*,' a sup of *dry*

drink, and let them just take a *waking nap*, by way of a little *fatiguing refreshment*. The climax, too, is extremely happy ; joys, not only '*transporting*,' but '*great!*'"

THE same pamphleteer wrote of a place where there would be not *only* patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs, but Whitfield as well. "This puts me in mind," says Foote, "of what happened at a certain place, in summing up the evidence against a libeller of the revolution. 'The prisoner has dared, gentlemen, to vilify even the revolution, gentlemen; a measure, gentlemen, visibly begun, conducted and completed by the peculiar interposition of divine *Providence;* and not only that, gentlemen, but confirmed by *Act of Parliament*.'"

Theodore E. Hook

THEODORE HOOK.



BON-MOTS

OF

THEODORE HOOK.

ON one occasion, while Hook was improvising at the piano, Sir David Wilkie came quietly into the room, making his salutation in a whisper, lest he should disturb the singer, who was so far from being disconcerted that he immediately introduced the new-comer to the company as

> "My worthy friend, douce Davy Wilkie,
> Who needn't speak so soft and silky,"

since his entrance, instead of interrupting him, had supplied him with another verse. A minute or two later a particle of candle-wick fell upon the arm of a young lady, an incident

which Hook instantly seized by addressing the lady, and declaring that it excited no surprise in him whatever—

"Since he knew very well, by his former remarks,
That wherever she went she attracted the sparks."

—∿∿∿—

"THEY well-nigh stun one," said Hook in reference to the Duke of Darmstadt's brass band at a morning concert, "with those terrible wind instruments, which roar away in defiance of all rule, except that which Hoyle addresses to young whist players when in doubt —*trump it!*"

—∿∿∿—

THERE was a grand entertainment at Belvoir Castle on the coming of age of the Marquis of Granby; the company were going out to see the fireworks, when Hook came to the Duke of Rutland, and said, "Now, isn't this provoking! I've lost my hat—what can I do?"

"Why the devil," returned his grace, "did you part with your hat?—I never do."

"Ah!" rejoined the wit, "but you have especially good reasons for sticking to your *Beaver*." *

* Belvoir is so pronounced.

AFTER Hook had improvised verses on the names of nearly every one present on a certain occasion, a friend thought he had shirked one name—that of Mr Rosenagen—and mentioned it. Hook immediately turned to the piano and continued—

"Yet more of my Muse is required,
Alas! I fear she is done;
But no! like a fiddler that 's tired,
I 'll *Rosen-agen*, and go on."

WALKING one day with a friend in the Strand, Hook had his attention directed to a very pompous gentleman who strutted along as if the street were his own. Instantly leaving his companion Hook went up to the stranger and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but pray may I ask—*Are you anybody in particular?*" Before the astonished pompous one could collect himself so as to reply, verbally or physically, Hook had joined his friend and passed on.

THE last time that Theodore Hook dined at Amen Corner, he was unusually late, and dinner was served before he made his appearance. Mr Barham apologised for having sat down without him, saying that they had quite given him up, and had supposed "that the weather had deterred him."

"Oh!" said Hook, "I had determined to come *weather* or no."

HOOK said that Bentley had given an ominous title to his new magazine—*Miss-sell-any*.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL having married a widow, Hook called him "the Widow's Mite."

AFTER one of Hook's wonderful exhibitions of improvising, a young fellow, anxious to shine in the same way, tried his hand at it, but soon broke down; and while he was floundering in the middle of a verse Hook gave him the *coup de grace* with the following couplet, robbed of all offence by the good-humoured smile which went with it——

"I see, sir, I see, sir, what 'tis that you 're hatching;
But mocking, you see, sir, is not *always* catching."

THEODORE HOOK once said to a man at whose table a publisher got extremely drunk, "Why, you appear to have emptied your *wine-cellar* into your *book-seller.*"

HOOK, who was about to be proposed as a member of the Phœnix Club, enquired when they met.

"Every Saturday evening during the winter," was the answer,

"Evening! Oh, then," said Hook, "I shall never make a Phœnix, *for I can't rise from the fire.*"

A PARTY of labourers were busy sinking a well, when Hook inquired of them what they were about.

"Boring for water, sir," was the answer.

"Water's a bore at any time," responded Hook; "besides you're quite wrong; remember the old proverb—let *well* alone."

HOOK was dining at a friend's, when the talk fell upon the funeral of Jack Reeve. He was asked if he had been present.

"Yes," said he, "I was out that day—*I met him in his private box going to the pit!*"

HOOK having been in a great measure forced into a quarrel with one of his associates in the Mauritius, a hostile meeting, terminating happily without bloodshed, was the consequence. On the affair reaching the ears of the Governor, he sent immediately for Mr Hook, and having commented upon the offence in terms somewhat more severe than the latter deemed warrantable, told him that a repetition of it would be visited with instant dismissal from office, and with the infliction of such further penalties as the law provided. "For," added the Governor, "I am determined, at all cost, to put down duelling."

"But, sir," pleaded the delinquent, "constituted as society is, there are occasions when the vindication of one's character renders the 'Gothic appeal to arms' as necessary as defence of the person would do."

"Such occasions must be avoided," said the Governor.

"But," continued Hood, "it is not always in a man's power to avoid insult. Suppose for example, a person were to address you yourself publicly, and say that he thought you were a meddling, impertinent upstart,—what course would be left for you to pursue?"

"I can't conceive such a case possible, sir," was the reply.

"Can't you, indeed?" replied Hook. "I can —*very*—I wish you good morning."

TWO silly brothers, twins, who were very much about town in Theodore Hook's time, took pains, by dressing alike, to deceive their friends as to their identity.

Tom Hill (the original of *Paul Pry*) was expatiating upon these modern Dromios, at which Hook grew impatient.

"Well, you will admit," said Hill, "that they resemble each other wonderfully: they are as like as *two peas*."

"They are," retorted Hook, "and quite as *green*."

OBSERVING some wine cellars beneath a chapel, Hook readily improvised the following lines:—

"There 's a spirit above and a spirit below;
A spirit of joy and a spirit of woe:
The spirit above is a spirit divine;
But the spirit below is the spirit of—wine."

ONE of Hook's daughters, who had just attained her twenty-first year during his last illness, came, accompanied by her sister Louisa, to salute him on the morning of her birthday. Turning to a friend who sat by the bedside, Hook said, "People say that I am fond of game, and I must own that I dearly love *Vingt-un and Loo*."

HOOK was once observed, during dinner, nodding like a mandarin in a tea-shop. On being asked the reason, he replied, "Why, when no one asks me to take champagne, I take sherry with the epergne, and bow to the flowers."

THEODORE Hook entered at Oxford University, and was duly presented to the Vice-Chancellor for matriculation, which ceremony was well-nigh stopped in consequence of a piece of facetiousness on the part of the candidate, who, on being asked if he was prepared to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, answered—"Oh, certainly, sir, *forty* if you please."

HOOK had not contributed any squibs to the columns of *John Bull* for some days, when a representative of the paper, taking him his salary as usual, entered the room saying—

"Have you heard the news?—the king and queen of the Sandwich Islands are dead, and we want something about them for the paper."

"Instantly," said Hook, "you shall have it—

"'Waiter, two Sandwiches,' cried Death,
And their wild majesties resigned their breath."

WHEN dining with the author of a work called *Three Words to the Drunkard*, Theodore Hook was asked to review it.

"Oh, my dear fellow, that I have done already in three words—pass the bottle!"

THEODORE Hook, meeting a friend just after leaving the King's Bench prison, was told that he was getting stouter.

"Yes," replied Hook, "I was enlarged to-day."

BEING told of the marriage of a political opponent, Hook exclaimed, "I am very glad to hear it." Then suddenly he added in a compassionating voice, "And yet I don't know why I should be, poor fellow, for he never did me much harm."

AT one of Hook's *symposia* a dispute arose about marine painting. An amateur who was present maintained, in opposition to Hook, that a boat might be a beautiful object in a picture. Hook soon wearied of the subject, and at length exclaimed, "We have had enough of the boat—let go the *painter*."

A GENTLEMAN who had a facility for shaping all manner of things out of orange peel, was displaying his abilities at a dinner, and succeeded to the admiration of the company in making a model pig.

Another guest tried the same feat, and after destroying many oranges and strewing the table with peel, he exclaimed, "Hang the pig!—I can't make one."

"Nay," said Hook, glancing at the mess on the table, "you have done more; instead of one pig, you have made a litter."

ONE of young Theodore Hook's "wild impulses" is thus described by Mrs Mathews in her *Anecdotes of Actors*:—

Walking one day with a friend in Oxford Street, he observed in the window of a petty jeweller's shop a square black enamel, framed, on which appeared, in gilt letters, addressed to the fair perambulators, the following stimulating preliminary to the purchase of some showy pendants which hung temptingly near:

"LADIES' EARS BORED."

This was enough. Theodore dragged his companion into the shop, where a little dapper man smiled behind the counter, rubbing his hands with glee at the approach of what he deemed two advantageous customers.

"Pray, sir," asked Hook, in a very grave tone of voice, and serious countenance, "are you the master of this shop?"

A ready bow, and a smart "Yes, sir," satisfied the questioner upon this material point.

"Then," added he, sternly, "be so good as to tell me what you mean by that placard placed in your window."

"What, *this*, sir?" asked the man, taking the enamel out of the window.

"Yes, *that*," replied Hook, with added severity of tone and manner.

"Oh, sir!" and the little man half smiled at the ignorance of the enquirer, "the meaning is very plain, sir."

"What!" said Hook, affecting credulity, "do you really mean to say that *you* or any person under your roof, can be serious in such a thing as that notice bespeaks?"

"Oh dear, yes, sir! I assure you it is done very often!"

"*What!!!*" exclaimed Hook, with added surprise and equal horror, "do you mean to assert that *men—English*men are capable of boring ladies' ears?"

"Dear me, sir, it 's very common, I assure you!" said the poor man, unconscious of the double truth of his assertion; "I 've bored dozens in my time."

"How!" cried out Hook in a voice that made the little jeweller jump, "and you tell this with an unblushing countenance," adding, with redoubled horror, not unmixed with wrath —"How *dare* you, sir, bore ladies' ears?"

"La, sir," faltered the little cockney, looking timidly at his strange visitor as though he began to doubt his sanity, "la, sir! the ladies *likes* it, sir! they couldn't 'ave h-earrings, you know, without it!"

"Hearings!" exclaimed Hook in a voice of disgust, adding with determination, "hearings or no hearings, no ladies' ears shall be bored if I can help it; and I have only to say, sir, that *if you don't take that notice out of your window* I 'll break every pane of glass in it; and moreover, if I by any chance—and I shall have my eye upon you—discover that you *bore* any more ladies' ears, I 'll break every bone in your skin. Bore ladies' ears! Monstrous!!" and turning to his friend, with a shudder, he asked, "Did you ever hear anything so horrible?"

The poor man now faintly attempted to speak, as if about to remonstrate against this undue interference and tyranny, but Hook would not listen, and reiterated in a more violent tone of horror and disgust, his intention, informing the little ear-piercer—who was as pale as his shirt, and whose very frill seemed to stand on end with amazement, not unmixed with fear of the alarming person before him—

that he should pass by his shop in the morning, indeed every morning for the next twelve months, and if he ever detected or heard of that barbarous little black agent of premeditated mischief in the window again, he would not leave a whole bone in his body. Here, quitting the shop with a look of dreadful determination, he left the poor terrified jeweller motionless with surprise and alarm.

The next day, and the next, the friends, together and severally, passed the window, but *the enamel was no longer there.*

ONE of Hook's associates—S. Beazeley, an architect and dramatist—was offered his epitaph in these words:—

> "Here lies Sam Beazeley,
> Who lived hard and died easily."

WHEN it was first intimated to Hook that his accounts as Accountant-general of Mauritius were considerably wrong, he treated the matter very lightly, saying, "If they wanted the *balance* regular, they should have looked for a man of more *weight*."

AN ingenious representation of the destruction of a Swiss village by an avalanche was exhibited at the Diorama in the Regent's Park, the effect of which was greatly increased by a clever vocal imitation of the dreary wintry wind whistling through the mountains. On one occasion the wind ceased whilst the exigencies of the case still demanded its continuance, when Theodore Hook instantly exclaimed, "*Bless me, Mr Thomson is tired*," and set all the spectators of the tragic scene loudly laughing.

THEODORE HOOK, the obese, when challenged to a run round the garden by Charles Lamb, declined the contest, remarking that he could outrun nobody but "the constable."

ON meeting a certain Peer—whose brother had been notorious for false play at cards—on the river fishing, Hook received, instead of the usual courteous greeting, only a stiff ceremonious bow. Determined not to notice it, he remarked, "What, my lord, following the family occupation, eh?—*punting*, I see,—punting!"

THE gentleman notorious from the charges of cheating referred to, brought an action for libel against certain of his accusers, which action, however, he abandoned at the last minute. Hook, immediately on hearing this, spoke this impromptu—

"Cease your humming,
The case is 'on';
Defendant 's *Cumming;*
Plaintiff 's—gone."

A CERTAIN Duke, who was to have been one of the Knights at the Eglinton Tournament, was lamenting that he had been obliged to excuse himself, on the ground of an attack of gout.

"How," said he, "could I get my poor puffed legs into those abominable iron boots?"

"It will be quite as appropriate," replied Hook, "if your Grace goes in your *list* shoes."

THE Licenser of Plays having objected to one of Hook's pieces, the author visited him and remonstrated, but in vain. Speaking of his interview afterwards, Hook said that "the great licenser actually shook his head *as if there was something in it.*"

WHEN Messrs Abbott & Egerton took the old Coburg Theatre for the purpose of bringing forward the legitimate drama, Abbott asked Hook if he could suggest a new name, the old being too much identified with "blood and thunder" to suit the proposed change of performance.

"Well," said Hook, "as you will, of course, butcher everything you attempt, suppose you call it the *Abattoir*."

AT a somewhat solemn dinner-party, the conversation turned upon the universality of the acknowledgment of Shakespeare's genius; someone present then remarked that the only individual he knew who thought the great poet overrated was Perry of the *Morning Chronicle*.

"That," said Hook, very gravely, "excites no surprise in me; you must recollect that the bard has gone out of his way, and substituted one beverage for another, for the express purpose of passing him by, and showing him a slight."

"Beverage! slight! What can you mean?" chorused several voices.

"Why in that well known line 'to suckle fools and chronicle small beer,' is it not manifest that he should have written *Chronicle* Perry?"

A VISITOR at Hook's Putney residence, viewing the bridge from the little terrace which overhung the Thames, said he had been informed that it was a very good investment, and, turning to his host, inquired if such was the case.

"I don't really know," said Theodore, "but you have only to cross it and you are sure to be *tolled*."

HOOK was at some large party where the lady of the house was even more than usually solicitous to get him to make sport for her guests. A ring formed round him of people only wanting a word's encouragement to burst out into a violent laugh.

"Do, Mr Hook, *do* favour us," said the lady for the hundredth time.

"Indeed, madam, I can't; I can't, indeed. I am like that little bird, the canary, and can't lay my eggs when anyone is looking at me."

ON the death of an actress, Mrs Wall by name, being announced, Hook observed, "Well, I suppose then by this time she is stuck all over with bills,—this is the way they serve all the *dead walls* about London."

HOOK was imprisoned, there being found a deficiency of twelve thousand pounds in his Mauritius accounts. On his release the sheriff's-officer invited him to a dinner, when he startled the company with making sport out of his own disgrace by singing an improvised song every verse of which ended with the chorus—

"Let him hang, with a curse, this atrocious, pernicious
Scoundrel, that emptied the till at Mauritius."

THEODORE HOOK was dining with a Mr Hatchet, who said deprecatingly, "Ah, my dear fellow, I am sorry to say you will not get to-day such a dinner as our friend Tom Moore gave us."

"Certainly not," replied Hook, "from a hatchet one can expect nothing but a chop."

AN old lady friend whom Hook had called to see insisted upon his staying to dine with her. On sitting down, the servant uncovered a dish which contained two mutton chops, and the hostess said—

"Mr Hook, you see your dinner."

"Thank you, ma'am," said he, "but *where's yours?*"

AN acquaintance of Hook's had "a bee in his bonnet" on the subject of the millennium. He was always agitated over its near approach, and on one occasion said definitely, that the world would be at an end in three years from that date.

Hook, who was reading a paper, looked up and said quietly, "Look here L., if you are inclined to back your opinion, give me five pounds now, and I will undertake to pay you fifty if it occur." The offer was not accepted.

HOOK had a recipe of his own to prevent exposure to the night air. Describing it he said, "I was very ill some months ago, and my doctor gave me particular orders not to expose myself to the night air; so I came up every day to Crockford's, or to some other place to dinner, and I made it a rule on no account to go home again till about four or five in the morning."

STOICAL virtues Hook aptly criticised by saying that "satisfying desires by lopping them off is as if a man were to cut off his head when he wanted a hat."

ANDREW CROSSE, "the electrician," said that he was once at a party with Theodore Hook, when a Mr Winter was announced, a well-known inspector of taxes. Hook immediately roared out—

Here comes Mr Winter, inspector of taxes,
I 'd advise ye to give him whatever he axes,
I 'd advise ye to give him, without any flummery,
For though his name 's Winter, his actions are summary.

THEODORE HOOK was walking with a friend in the days when "Warren's Blacking" was advertised on all hands. In one place the announcement merely ran "Try Warren's B——."

The friend drew Hook's attention to this, when he quietly observed, "I see ; the rest is lacking."

ONE evening at Brighton, at a large party at which Hook was the lion of the occasion, the conversation turned upon a Miss Cox, at

that time one of the reigning belles of London-by-the-Sea. Hook sat down to the piano as usual, and asked for a subject, and Miss Cox's name was mentioned, whereupon he extemporised a song of over twenty stanzas, of which however but part got committed to paper—

"When straying alone on the shore,
A-picking of weeds from the rocks,
I beheld (I ne'er saw her before)
The charming and pretty Miss Cox.

I followed this grace to a door,
When she gave to the rapper some knocks,
She entered; I dared do no more,
But learn'd that her name was Miss Cox.

I 'm wearing and wasting away,
And had I the strength of an ox,
To a shadow I soon should decay,
If frowned on by charming Miss Cox.

But she knows not my name nor my means,
If I 'm poor, or have cash in the stocks;
She 's haunted by lords and by deans,
And I shall be robbed of my Cox.

I 'm shy and I 'm pale and I 'm thin,
And I wear fleecy hosiery socks,
Fleecy hosiery next to my skin,
Which perhaps might not please sweet Miss Cox.

My hair is perhaps getting gray ;
I'm *pitted* a bit with small-pox,
My limbs, too, are wasting away—
Oh, would I were *pitied* by Cox !

If she's kind I shall quickly get round,
My hair will grow curly in locks,
No flannel about me be found,
If warm'd by the smile of Miss Cox.

When I walk on the beach, and I see
Little children a-playing, in frocks,
I think what a thing it would be
If I should get married to Cox.

To church let me lead her, and there,
With a service the most orthodox,
Put an end to this teasing affair
By changing the name of Miss Cox."

ON the evening of his arrival at the University, Hook contrived to give his brother the slip, and joined a party of old school-fellows in a carouse at one of the taverns. Sundry bowls of "Bishop" and "Egg-flip" having been discussed, songs, amatory and Bacchanalian, having been sung with full choruses, and altogether the jocularity having begun to pass "the limit of becoming mirth," the Proctor made his appearance, and advancing to the table at which the

"freshman" was presiding, put the usual question,—

"Pray, sir, are you a member of this University?"

"No, sir," replied Hook, rising and bowing respectfully. "Pray, sir, are you?"

A little disconcerted at the extreme gravity of the youth, the Proctor held out his ample sleeve, "You see this, sir?"

"Ah," returned Hook, having examined the fabric with great earnestness for a few seconds. "Yes! I perceive—Manchester velvet—and may I take the liberty, sir, of inquiring how much you might have paid per yard for the article?"

The quiet imperturbability of manner with which this was said was more than the reverend gentleman could stand; and, muttering something about "supposing it was a mistake," he effected a retreat, amid shouts of laughter from Hook's companions, in which the other occupants of the coffee-room were constrained to join.

ACCORDING to Hook there is a fascination in the air of that little *cul-de-sac* known as Downing Street—an hour's inhalation of its atmosphere affects some men with giddiness, others with blindness, and very frequently with the most oblivious forgetfulness.

HOOK, describing a college examination paper, said that one problem which was given to him he did in a twinkling. Given *C A B* to find *Q*. *Answer:* Take your C A B through Hammersmith, turn to the left just before you come to Brentford, and Kew is right before you.

TOM HILL (the original of *Paul Pry*) was an old man of whom Hook made incessant fun. All his friends looked upon Hill as a Methuselah, but no one knew his real age. James Smith said his age could never be known now, for the parish register had been destroyed in the great fire of London.

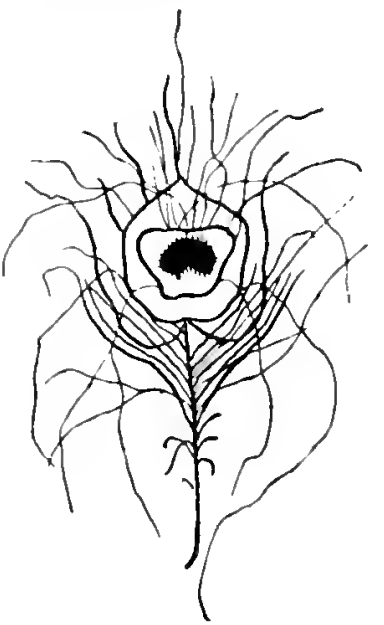
"Pooh! pooh!" broke in Hook, "he is one of the little Hills that are spoken of as skipping in the Psalms."

HOOK and a friend were anxious to produce an outspoken periodical, and sought a "proprietor." They interviewed the proprietor of an earlier venture, but he was afraid of "fine and imprisonment," at that time too often the penalty paid for outspokenness. "All argument with him," said Hook, "proved *Newgate-ory*."

AN illiterate vendor of beer at Harrogate wrote over his door, "Bear sold here." "He spells the word quite correctly," said Hook, "if he means to apprise us that the article is his own *Bruin*."

HOOK and Terry were passing along Frith Street, Soho, when their noses made known to them that at a certain house they were passing a handsome dinner must just be preparing.

"What a feast!" said Terry, as they got a glimpse through the kitchen-window. "Jolly dogs! I should like to make one of them."



"I'll take any bet that I *do*," returned Hook, "call for me here at ten o'clock, and you will find that I shall be able to give a tolerable account of the worthy gentleman's champagne and venison."

"Why, you don't know him," said Terry doubtfully.

"Not at present," replied Hook, "but don't be later than ten." So saying he marched up

the step, gave an authoritative rap with the burnished knocker, and was quickly lost to the sight of his astonished companion. As a matter of course he was immediately ushered by the servant, as an expected guest, into the drawing-room, where a large party had already assembled. The apartment being well-nigh full, no notice was at first taken of his intrusion, and half-a-dozen people were laughing at his *bon-mots* before the host discovered the *mistake*. Affecting not to observe the visible embarrassment of the latter, and ingeniously avoiding any opportunity for explanation, Hook rattled on till he had attracted the greater portion of the company in a circle round him, and some considerable time elapsed ere the old gentleman was able to catch the attention of the agreeable stranger.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, contriving at last to get in a word, "but your name, sir, —I did not quite catch it—servants are so abominably incorrect—and I am really a little at a loss—"

"Don't apologise, I beg," graciously replied Theodore, "Smith, my name is Smith, and, as you justly observe, servants are always making some stupid blunder or another; I remember a remarkable instance," &c.

"But, really, my dear sir," continued the host, at the termination of the story illustrative of stupidity in servants, "I think the mistake

on the present occasion does not originate in the source you allude to. I certainly did not anticipate the pleasure of Mr Smith's company to dinner to-day."

"No, I dare say not—you said *four* in your note, I know, and it is now, I see, a quarter past five—you are a little fast by the way—but the fact is I have been detained in the city—as I was about to explain when—"

"Pray," exclaimed the other, interrupting his guest's volubility, "whom, may I ask, do you suppose you are addressing?"

"Whom? Why Mr Thompson, of course,—old friend of my father. I have not the pleasure indeed of being personally known to you, but having received your kind invitation yesterday on my arrival from Liverpool—Frith Street—four o'clock—family party—come in boots—you see I have taken you at your word. I am only afraid I have kept you waiting."

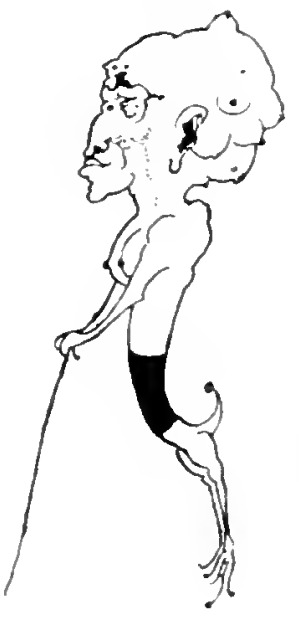
"No, no; not all. But permit me to observe, my dear sir, my name is not exactly Thompson, it is Jones and—"

"Jones!" repeated the *soi-disant* Smith, in admirably assumed consternation, "Jones!—why surely I cannot have—yes, I must—Good Heaven! I see it all! My *dear* sir, what an unfortunate blunder—wrong house—what must you think of such an intrusion!—you will permit me to retire at present, and to-morrow—"

"Pray don't think of retiring!" exclaimed

the hospitable old gentleman, "your friend's table must have been cleared long ago if, as you say, four was the hour named, and I am only too happy to be able to offer you a seat at mine."

Hook, of course, could not hear of such a thing—could not think of trespassing upon the kindness of a perfect stranger—if too late for



Thompson, there were plenty of chop-houses at hand—the unfortunate part of the business was that he had made an appointment with a gentleman to call for him at ten o'clock. The good-natured Jones, however, positively refused to allow so entertaining a visitor to withdraw dinnerless. Mrs Jones joined in solicitation, the Misses Jones smiled bewitchingly, and at last Mr Smith, who soon recovered from his confusion, was prevailed upon to offer his arm to one of the ladies, and to take his place at the dinner table.

In all probability the family of Jones never passed such an evening before. Hook naturally exerted himself to the utmost to keep the party in an unceasing roar of laughter, and to make good the first impression. The mirth grew fast and furious, when, by way of *coup de grace*, he seated himself at the pianoforte, and struck

off into one of those extemporaneous effusions which had filled more critical judges than the Joneses with delight and astonishment. Ten o'clock struck, and on Mr Terry being announced, Hook triumphantly wound up the performance with this explanatory stanza—

"I am very much pleased with your fare,
Your cellar 's as prime as your cook.—
My friend 's Mr Terry, the player,
And I 'm Mr Theodore Hook!"

ON his way home from Mauritius, under arrest, at Helena Hook encountered Lord Charles Somerset on his way to assume the governorship of the Cape. Lord Charles, who had met him in London occasionally, and knew nothing of his arrest, said, "I hope you are not going home for your health, Mr Hook?"

"Why," answered he, "I am sorry to say, they think there is something wrong in the *chest.*"

THEODORE HOOK would invent names for the various dishes on a dinner-table; Maccaroni, for instance, he called "tobacco pipes made easy"; scalloped oysters, "children's ears done in sawdust"; and parsnips he called "sick carrots;" while whitebait he likened to "silkworms in batter."

AN old friend visited Hook in a sponging house, whither debt had driven him.

"Why, really, Hook," said the visitor, "you are not so badly lodged here, after all; this is a cheerful room enough."

"Oh yes!" returned Hook in a significant tone, as he pointed to the iron defence outside, "remarkably so—*barring* the windows!"

STAYING at a country house on one occasion, Hook had even outdone himself in improvising during a long and pleasant evening. One last song was solicited. Hook, fresh as ever, responded to the request, taking as his subject, and pointing every stanza with the words, "Good-Night."

Suddenly, in the midst of the mirth, some one threw open a shutter close by the end of the pianoforte; the sun was rising, and forced its early light into the apartment. On the instant the singer paused, a boy with wondering eyes fixed upon him, stood by his side. Like old Timotheus he "changed his hand," and turning from the ladies clustered round, in a voice of deep pathos apostrophised the child, and thus concluded—

"But the sun see the heavens adorning,
Diffusing life, pleasure, and light!
To thee 'tis the promise of morning,
To us 'tis the closing 'good-night!'"

AT Lord Melville's trial Hook and a friend were present. They arrived early, and were engaged in conversation when the peers began to enter. At this moment a country-looking lady, whom he afterwards found to be a resident at Rye, Sussex, touched his arm and said—

"I beg your pardon, sir, but, pray, who are those gentlemen in red now coming in?"

"Those, ma'am," returned Theodore, "are the Barons of England; in these cases the junior peers always come first."

"Thank you, sir, much obliged to you." "Louisa, my dear" (turning to a girl about fourteen), "tell Jane (about ten) those are the Barons of England; and the juniors—that 's the youngest, you know—always goes first. Tell her to be sure and remember that when we get home."

"Dear me, ma!" said Louisa, "can that gentleman be one of the *youngest?* I am sure he looks one—very old."

Human nature, said Hook, could not stand this; anyone, though with no more mischief in him than a door, must have been excited to a hoax.

"And pray, sir," continued the lady, "what gentlemen are those?" pointing to the bishops, who came next in order, in the dress which they wore on State occasions—scarlet and lawn sleeves over their doctor's robes.

"Gentlemen, ma'am!" said Hook, "those

are not gentleman; those are *ladies*, elderly ladies—the Dowager-Peeresses in their own right."

The fair enquirer fixed a penetrating glance upon his countenance, saying as plainly as an eye can say, "Are you quizzing me or no?" Not a muscle moved; till at last, tolerably satisfied with her scrutiny, she turned round and whispered—

"Louisa, dear, the gentleman *says* that these are elderly ladies, and Dowager-Peeresses in their own right! Tell Jane not to forget *that*."

All went on smoothly till the Speaker of the House of Commons attracted her attention by the rich embroidery of his robes.

"Pray, sir," said she, "and who is that fine-looking person opposite?"

"That, madam," was the answer, "is Cardinal Wolsey!"

"No, sir," cried the lady, drawing herself up, and casting at her informant a look of angry disdain, "we know a little better than that; Cardinal Wolsey has been dead many a good year!"

"No such thing, my dear madam, I assure you," replied Hook with perfect gravity; "it has been, I know, so reported in the country, but without the least foundation; in fact, those rascally newspapers will say anything."

The good old gentlewoman appeared thunderstruck, opened her eyes to their full extent, and gasped like a dying carp; *vox faucibus hæsit*, seizing a daughter with each hand, she hurried without a word from the spot.

A WOULD-BE Scientist was boring Theodore Hook with the distinctions in formation and habits between two animals of the same *genus*. Hook, whose patience was soon exhausted, and who did not wish to know anything about it, exclaimed, "It flashes on me now, I see the distinction: it's just the same with swine."

"With swine!" echoed the astonished naturalist.

"Yes," repeated Hook, "with swine, for, you know, some *pigs* are *driven*, and other *pigs* are *lead*."

The *bore* gave a grunt, and relapsed into silence.

ONE morning at Drayton Manor, where Hook was staying as a guest, some one after breakfast happened to read out from a newspaper a paragraph in which a well-known coroner was charged with having had a corpse unnecessarily disinterred. The ladies were very severe in condemnation of such unfeeling conduct; a gallant captain, however, who was present, took up the cudgels in behalf of the accused, maintaining that he was a very kind-hearted man, and incapable of doing anything without strong reasons which would be calculated to annoy the friends of the deceased. The contest waxed warm. "Come," said the Captain, at length, turning to Hook, who was poring over the *Times* in a corner of the room, and who had taken no part in the discussion; "come, Hook, you know W.; what do you think of him? Is he not a good-tempered, good-natured fellow?"

"Indeed he is," replied Hook, laying aside his paper; "I should say he was just the very man to *give a body a lift.*"

HOOK on one occasion found himself in an awkward predicament. Having ridden about in a coach for some time, he found that he had not wherewithal to pay its hire. He pulled the checkstring and told the driver

to proceed to No. — Street, the West End residence of a well-known surgeon. Arrived, he ordered the coachman to "knock and ring." On the door being opened, he hastily entered.

"Is Mr Dash at home? I must see him immediately."

The surgeon soon made his appearance, and Hook in a hurried and agitated tone commenced—"My dear sir, I trust you are disengaged?" Mr Dash bowed. "Thank Heaven; pardon my incoherence, sir—make allowance for the feeling of a husband—*perhaps a father*—your attendance, sir, is instantly required—*instantly*—by Mrs Black, &c. Pray, lose not a moment. It is a *very* peculiar case, I assure you."

"I will start directly," said the medical man. "I have only to run upstairs, get my apparatus, and step into my carriage."

"Ah! exactly," returned Hook, "but I am in an agony until I see you fairly off—don't think of ordering out your own carriage—here's one at the door—jump into that.'

Mr Dash, with a great mahogany case under his arm, made the jump, and soon found himself

at the house to which he had been directed: it was the abode of a very stiff-mannered middle-aged maiden lady, not unknown to Hook; one moreover to whom he owed a grudge, a kind of debt which he rarely failed to pay. The doctor was admitted, but on explaining the object of his visit, soon found it convenient to make a precipitate retreat from the claws of the infuriated spinster into the arms of the hackney coachman, who deposited him in safety at his own door, which, however he declined quitting without the full amount of his fare.

AT a dinner party Hook was pressed to give yet another of his extemporary songs, and consented, saying the subject should be John Murray. That worthy publisher, however, vehemently objected, and a ludicrous contention took place, during which Hook dodged Murray round the table, placing chairs in his path, and singing all the while a sort of recitation, of which only the commencement got committed to paper:—

"My friend, John Murray, I see has arrived at the head of the table,
And the wonder is, at this time of night, that John Murray should be able.
He 's an excellent hand at a dinner, and not a bad one at a lunch,
But the devil of John Murray is—that he never will pass the punch."

WHILE he was in the Mauritius Hook invited a couple of new arrivals to dine with him *à la* Mauritius. The travellers took their seats with a full determination of doing ample justice to the far-famed delicacies of the island. The first course presented to the eyes of the astonished but still unsuspecting strangers comprised nearly every species of *un*eatable that could be got together. An enormous gourd graced the centre of the table, strange de-appetising dishes were placed around, and in turn pressed upon the attention of the guests.

"Allow me to offer you a little *cat-curry*," exclaimed the host; "there is an absurd prejudice against these things in Europe I know, but *this* I can really recommend; or, perhaps you would prefer a little *devilled monkey;* that is, I believe, a dish of *fried snakes* opposite you, Mr J."

The guest recoiled in alarm.

"Hand those lizards round, they seem particularly fine."

Nastiness after nastiness was proffered in vain; the perplexed Cockneys struggled hard to maintain a decent composure, but with difficulty kept their ground before the unsavoury abominations. What was to be done! —it was clearly the *cuisine de pays*, and the host appeared evidently distressed at their want of appreciation of his fare. One gentleman,

at length, in sheer despair, thought he "*would* just try a lizard."

"Pray do so," eagerly returned Hook, "you will find the flavour a little peculiar at first I daresay; but it is astonishing how soon it becomes pleasant to the palate."

But however rapidly a taste for the saurian delicacy might be acquired, the adventurous individual in question was not destined to make

the experiment. In endeavouring to help himself to one of those unpromising dainties, the tail became separated from its body—it was too much for his nerve—turning a little pale he pushed aside his plate and begged to be excused. Since the celebrated "feast after the manner of the ancients," such a collation had never been put down before hungry men: the jest, however,

was not pushed to extremes, a second course succeeded; and, on the choice viands of which it consisted, the guests proceeded to fall to with what appetite they might.

THERE is an end to all things, even to Upper Wimpole Street, Theodore Hook is reported to have said when on his death-bed.

ON one occasion, when Hook had been asked to go to the piano and extemporise, the subject which was given to him was "the Jews." He sat down and immediately rattled off all sorts of humorous nonsense, cleverly winding up with—

I dare say you think there 's little wit
In this, but you 've all forgot
That instead of being a *Jew d'esprit*
'Tis only a *Jew de mot*.

MR HUME, M.P. was a favourite butt for the shafts of Hook's wit. Certain lines from Horace were taken, each containing some form of the word *humus* or its cognates—were converted by ingenious translation into so many

prophetic allusions to the history of the indefatigable Member.

"*Ex Humili potens*—From a surgeon to a Member of Parliament."

"*Ne quis Hum-asse velit*—Let no one call Hume an ass."

"*Humili modo loqui*—To talk Scotch like Hume."

"*Humi procumbit Bos*—Bull falls foul of Hume."*

Finally Hook suggested as a motto for the M. P.—"*Graiis expers catenis*—I have got rid of my Greek bonds."

THEODORE HOOK once defined contingencies as "things that never happen."

THE following song is a wonderful example of Hook's improvisatorial powers; according to his biographer "it was nearly all improvised one evening by Hook." Each character, we are told, is a portrait:—

Miss Elizabeth Bull of good sense was as full
As any young lady need be;
I 'll tell you a tale of her Uncle, old Bull,
And of her, as she told it to me.

* Alluding to *John Bull*, in whose columns many of Hook's witticisms at the expense of Hume appeared.

I'm an heiress, she said, to a wildish estate,
Which very productive might be;
But 'twas going to rack at a terrible rate,
And I thought there'd be nothing for me

I just dropped a hint of impeachment for waste
Unless Uncle Bull would agree
To get better Stewards — when, lo! in great haste,
The old ones came courting to me

With one tooth in his head, and two orbs in his eye
And "his garter below his knee"
The first thought my passions and feelings to try
By a pledge that he'd stand by *me*.

'Twas he who once said "by his order he 'd stand,"
Yet for dinners with Alderman Key,
And a small penny cup from a sad dirty hand,
Broke that pledge as he 'd break one to me.

Go! I cried, and if ever you speak to a Peer,
Let your key be a *minor key;*
The man who his Order gave up for a cheer,
Is no man for a lady like me

The next who appeared was "a candid man,"
Who admitted he did not see
That two five-pound notes would make sovereigns ten,
If one, would give five pounds to me.

He stammered much stuff about stock and the stocks,
Tithes, factories, and niggers, and tea;
But I found he was only a judge of an ox,
So I told him he should never lead me.

With his hand to his head, and a tear in his eye,
Came the nigger's late Massa Grandee,
With razors, and shoes, and with millinery,
He had filched from those niggers for me.

Oh! how from a man by such presents endear'd,
In my heart could I find it to flee?
He who tried to shave niggers, who haven't a beard
Might next, perhaps, try to shave me.

The next one who came owed nature a spite,
For a poor younger son was he;
His body was parched by a with'ring blight,
But his mind seemed more blighted to me.

That body, thus parched, was all one little sting,
He 'd have made a most capital flea ;
It seemed a disgrace that so puny a thing
Should have spoilt the estate for me

But next a great lawyer was minded to woo ;
Peradventure his bended knee,
Though it moved not the Lords, would, without much ado,
Gain the vote of a lady like me.

He tucked up his gown and he perk 'd up his wig,
But his nose I most marvelled to see ;
It twitched, for he knew it deserved a good twig ;
So he failed in his love suit to me.

The next the Whig ladies all deemed a great prize—
I was blind if I didn't soon see
That of all Whigs he had the most beautiful eyes,
Which he lovingly fixed upon me.

With a " what does it signify " sort of a look,
And an air of so witching a glee,
He skipped like a lamb, and invited my crook,
But no crook was held out by me.

Then a gouty old lord was wheeled in, in a chair,
And right merry he seemed to be,
Till they told him " my Lady " was waiting there,
When he turned off, away from me.

I saw one in sanctity's odour recline,—
Strange guest !—on *that* lady's *settee !*
But the odour I smelt was the odour of wine,
It seemed to be Port wine to me.

I looked on the next, less in anger than ruth,
For once of high promise was he ;
But they lured him away from the friends of his youth,
And so—he was lost to me.

Then swaggering came, with his hat on one side,
A landsman who talked of the sea ;
A sharpish young lad, I perhaps might have tried,
But his friends were all too bad for me.

I had nearly forgotten to mention the while
One who proved very wordy to be,
Who spouted a question as long as a mile
Which was all without point to me.

Then a middle-aged beau, with a tittupping walk,
And the best cut of coats you could see,
With the largest of whiskers, the smallest of talk,
Came philandering up to me.

Old Tally was jealously limping behind
With tittering ladies three;
Over-reached, over-womaned, it wouldn't be kind
Or pleasant to take him to me.

What a set! but I told them I found them all out;
I saw how it was and would be;
That they were the cause of the general rout,
And had wronged my poor Uncle and me.

My uncle I told of a straightforward man,
From humbug and treachery free;
Who would save the estate—if anyone can—
And improve it for him and for me.

"I'll take, then," he said, "this old friend of the Bulls,
An honest good Stewart he 'll be;
The Tenants no more shall be treated like gulls,
As they have been—between you and me."

ON the publication of *Prometheus Unbound* Hook immediately spoke these lines—

Shelley styles his poem *Prometheus Unbound*,
And 'tis like to remain so while time circles round;
For surely an age would be spent in the finding
A reader so weak as to *pay for the binding*.

THE following was a happy impromptu on seeing the name Milton over a livery-stable:—

Two Miltons in separate ages were born;
The cleverer Milton 'tis clear we have got:
Though the other had talents the world to adorn,
This lives by his *mews*, which the other could not!

ON a contest, Gaynor *v.* Sharp, Hook impromptued thus—

Poor Gaynor 's a loser!—
That such a good bruiser
In time will astonish us—nothing is plainer—
Tho' Sharp is no flat,
Yet, no matter for that,
Had Gaynor been sharp, Sharp had not been gainer.

HOOK used his marvellous memory with amusing effect on one occasion when he and Cannon—a congenial spirit—were engaged to meet, at the table of a common friend, a certain reviewer well-known in the literary world for his varied information and for the somewhat dictatorial manner in which he was in the habit of dispensing it.

Hook selected a subject which, though not perhaps particularly abstruse to astronomers, he thought was a little out of his friend's line, the Precession of the Equinoxes ; and referring to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* learnt the entire article, a very long one, by heart, without however stopping to comprehend a single sentence.

Soup had scarcely been removed, when Cannon, as had been previously arranged, led the conversation round to the desired point—and, availing himself of a sudden pause, drew

the eyes of the whole party upon Mr R., whom he had already, with no little tact, contrived to entangle in the topic. The gentleman, as had been anticipated, happened not to be "up" in that particular branch of science; to plead ignorance was not to be thought of, and after a vague, and not very intelligible answer, he made an effort to escape from the dilemma

by adroitly turning the question. His tormentors, however, were men cunning of fence, and not to be easily baffled: Hook returned to the charge.

"My dear sir, you don't seem to have explained the thing to 'the Dean,' with what commentators would call 'your usual *acumen*,' for everybody, of course, is aware that 'The most obvious of all the celestial motions is the diurnal

revolution of the starry heavens,' " &c. Here followed a couple of columns from the aforesaid disquisition in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

" But," continued Hook, " you can doubtless put the thing in a much clearer light: I confess the 'Mutation of the axis, which changes also the longitudes and right ascension of the stars and planets, by changing the equinoctial points, and thus occasioning an equation in the precession of the equinoctial point,' is a little beyond me."

For some time Mr R. parried the attack with considerable dexterity; but as the joke became obvious, others pursued it, and the victim was overwhelmed by inquiries relating to the " parallax of the earth's orbit," " disturbing force and matter of the moon," &c., &c., till he was compelled at length to forego all claim to infallibility, and throw himself on the mercy of the foe.

HOOK was spending an evening with old George Colman " the younger." Looking carefully at his youthful companion the old man said, mistaking him for the historian of Rome, " You must be a very extraordinary young man. Why, sir, you can hardly yet have reached your twenty-first birthday."

" I have just passed it," said Hook, adding readily " *vingt-un*—overdrawn."

IN a number of amusing verses Theodore Hook, never a very studious student at Oxford, sketched a "Cockney University" of the future which should "set all the journeymen learning" until—

"Hackney-coachmen from *Swift* shall reply, if you feel
Annoyed at being ruthlessly shaken;
And butchers, of course, be flippant from *Steele*,
And pig-drivers well versed in Bacon—
From *Locke* shall the blacksmith's authority crave,
And gas-men cite *Coke* at discretion—
Undertakers talk *Gay* as they go to the grave,
And watermen *Rowe* by profession."

ONE of the many pleasantries which Hook ascribed to Rogers is the following: "On Saturday se'en night," says an evening paper, "three of the king's pages, returning from Windsor with His Majesty's bag and letters in the dog-cart, just as the horse entered the outer gate of the lodge he was seized with the staggers, and falling, overturned the vehicle into a ditch; luckily the passengers escaped without any serious injury." It is curious to see how localities alter circumstances, even in the same county. In Windsor this accident is styled *staggering;* in Reading turning over three pages at once would have been called *skipping*.

"ON the Departure of a certain Count for Italy; whence he has sent some Italian Music in Score for the Opera," Hook wrote this epigram and fathered it on Samuel Rogers—

"He has quitted the countess—what can she wish more?
She loses one husband, and gets back a *score*."

SEVERAL of the many "good stories" in Theodore Hook's volumes were actually true, the author himself having often been the hero, notably of this piece of fun up the river. It is here given as told by Hook himself of one of his own characters:—

"I say, you, sir," cried the undaunted joker to a very respectable round-bodied gentleman who was sitting squeezed into the stern-sheet of a skiff, floating most agreeably to himself adown the stream, "what are you doing there? You have no business in that boat, and you know it."

A slight yaw of the skiff into the wind's eye was the only proof of the stout navigator's agitation. Still Daly was inexorable, and he again called to the unhappy mariner to get out of the boat.

"I tell you, my fat friend," he cried, "you have no business in that boat!"

Flesh and blood could not endure this reiterated declaration. The ire of the cockney was roused.

"No business in this boat, sir? What d'ye mean?"

"I mean what I say," said Daly, "You have no business in it, and I 'll prove it."

"I think, sir, you will prove no such thing," said the navigator, whose progress through the water was none of the quickest; "perhaps you don't know, sir, that this is my own pleasure boat?"

"That 's it," said Daly, "now you *have* it—no man can have any *business* in a *pleasure*-boat. Good-day, sir. That 's all."

AT his club dinner on one occasion, owing to his late arrival, Hook was placed next an individual who availed himself of an opportunity of entering into direct communication with his eminent neighbour. The slightest symptoms of fun on the part of the latter were hailed with noisy approbation, and his puns were instantly repeated for the benefit of those at the upper end of the table, with highly flattering comments, such as "Uncommonly good! capital! excellent, is it not?"

Not content with this, he endeavoured to monopolize Hook's conversation altogether,

constantly appealing to him, and, in short, forcing himself upon the other's notice in a manner not less ill-bred than annoying.

"Who is he?" scribbled Hook on a slip of paper which he tossed across the table to Stephen Price.

"A second-rater on the —— newspaper," was the reply. This, as Price probably foresaw, served only to aggravate the offence; for towards the latter portion of his life Hook entertained, or at all events expressed, opinions far from flattering with respect to the "gentlemen of the press."

A mode of escape suggested itself to the fertile brain of the wit. Unwilling to disturb the company by a display of that severity which he had at command, he chose to adopt sedatives, replying courteously to every remark, and invariably concluding with, "*But, my dear sir, you don't drink.*"

Gratified by the attention he obtained, his new friend began to push forward his observations with greater confidence; they were all received with a polite smile, a nod of assent, and a motion towards the decanter—

"Exactly! But I see, my dear sir, *you don't drink!*"

Glass after glass was filled and emptied by the unsuspecting victim, at the suggestion of his companion, who redoubled his civilities as he observed an increasing profundity in the former's criticisms, a wilder luxuriance in his eloquence, and a more decided tendency towards imperfect articulation.

"You see, Mr Hook, with regard to *Shakspere*, my opinion is—"

"I beg your pardon for the interruption, but permit me—your glass, I see, is empty. *My dear sir, you don't drink.*"

The *finale* was not long delayed; the enemy did his work and stole away, not only his victim's brain but his speech also. The now silenced bore was removed, and Hook had peace for a while.

AN imaginary Twelfth Night Entertainment at Holland House was described by Hook with much humour. He supposed the various Whig notabilities drawing "character cards" at random from a vase. The best were certainly those given to Sydney Smith and Samuel Rogers, the former of whom drew forth a card bearing these lines, headed, "Peter Plymley."

"Peter, once, to please his betters,
Wrote a little book of letters;
What he wanted, he has not—
PETER's *here*—his book's forgot!"

The verse applied to Rogers was occasioned by his cadaverous appearance—

"Behold the ghost of Gaffer Thumb—
Pale, sallow, small, and nearly dumb;
I walked on earth—and Arthur shook so!
I am not dead—*but only look so.*"

UPON the celebrated duel between Tom Moore and Jeffrey, when "Bow Street myrmidons stood laughing by," Hook produced the following epigram :—

When Anacreon would fight, as the poets have said,
A reverse he displayed in his vapour,
For while all his poems were loaded with lead,
His pistols were loaded with paper ;
For excuses Anacreon old custom may thank,
Such a *salvo* he should not abuse,
For the cartridge, by rule, is always made blank,
Which is fired away at *Reviews !*

OF some relatives very fond of "home doctoring," Hook said that they were "*Buchan*-eers." As for the old lady, he added, that she was "so delighted with everything pertaining to physic, that she drank wine every six hours out of 'dose glasses,' and filled her gold-fish globes with leeches, the evolutions of which she watched by the hour."

AS an excuse for a disappointed lover's taking to drink, Hook said, "it was only natural that an unsuccessful lover should be given to whine."

CROCKFORD, the little Temple-Bar fishmonger, had a club of his own, established under no flimsy false pretences, but ostensibly for the purpose of play. He enticed players to his faro bank by gratuitous suppers of a most *recherché* character, having secured, we are told, the services of the celebrated Ude as cook.

Some one was telling Theodore Hook of Crockford's Place, when he at once replied with great readiness: "He filleth the hungry with good things—and the rich he hath sent empty away."

OF a work in a great number of volumes, Hook happily suggested that it might be *pemmicaned* into a comparatively few pages.

SAMUEL ROGERS said: "Words cannot do justice to Theodore Hook's talent for improvisation—it was perfectly wonderful. He was one day sitting at the piano-forte, singing an extempore song as fluently as if he had had the words and music before him, when Tom Moore happened to look into the room, and Hook instantly introduced a long parenthesis—

"And here's Mr Moore
Peeping in at the door, &c."

THE last time I saw Hook was in the lobby of Lord Canterbury's house after a large evening party there. He was walking up and down, singing with great gravity, to the astonishment of the footmen, "Shepherds, I have lost my *hat*."

"AT all times and seasons" Theodore Hook's *John Bull* took occasion to make fun of Lord Brougham—

"All England praises me; but ivid Brougham
Is forced to give a still more attering doom;
His sense of taste, and truth, and honour's laws
JOHN BULL offends—this is *indeed* applause!"

ON the Latin gerunds—

When Dido's spouse to Dido would not come,
She mourned in silence, and was *Di Do Dumb*.

UP the river with a party of congenial spirits on one occasion Hook was keeping all in a roar of laughter, when an elderly gentleman, very neatly attired, and having the air of a well-to-do citizen, attracted by the fun that was going on, drew up his camp stool, and with a "No offence, I hope, gentlemen," joined in the conversation.

The new-comer was greatly pleased with such of Hook's jokes as he could manage to comprehend—when, for instance, Theodore informed him that they must be nearing the Isle of Wight, for he saw *cows* in the distance, the old gentleman's delight exceeded all sober bounds; but it was amusing to watch the extreme gravity with which he received an anecdote told of a certain worthy Baronet.

"Sir George," said Hook, "was once obliged to put off a dinner, in consequence of the sudden death of a relative, and sat down to a haunch of venison by himself. While eating he remarked to his butler that it would make an admirable hash on the morrow. 'Yes, Sir George,' said the man, 'if you leave off *now*.'"

HOOK, one afternoon succeeding a banquet at which he had dined—and wined—"not wisely but too well"—happened to drop into one of his clubs where he found a friend refreshing himself with a peculiar kind of punch of his own invention. Hook was with *some*—probably little—difficulty, persuaded to give an opinion as to the merits of the new drink. This was a matter not lightly to be decided, and some half dozen pints of the beguiling compound were discussed ere the authoritative "*imbibatur*" went forth. In the evening, at Lord Canterbury's, Hook was observed to eat even less than usual, and on being asked whether he was unwell, replied with unblushing coolness—

"Oh no, not exactly; but my stomach won't bear trifling with, and I was foolish enough to take a biscuit and a glass of sherry by way of luncheon."

THE following is one of Hook's happiest epigrams:—

It seems as if Nature had curiously plann'd
That men's names with their trades should agree;
There's Twining the Teaman, who lives in the Strand.
Would be *whining* if robb'd of his T.

SIR Robert Wilson, K.M.T.
"What 's that?" says a Southwark wight.
"La!" says his neighbour, "Don't you see,
That means an M.T. knight!"

ON Lord Brougham, too, we have the following epigram:—

"Brougham on his tombstone would have writ—
'Here lies the enemy of Pitt.'
And half the line at least applies,
For every one admits '*he lies*.'"

HOOK having observed over the door of a shop, "Mr ——, pen and quill manufacturer," very readily produced the following lines:—

"You put above your door, and in your bills,
You 're manufacturer of *pens* and *quills*;
And for the first you well may feel a pride,
Your *pens* are better far than most I 've tried;
But for the *quills* your words are somewhat loose,
Who *manufactures quills* must be a Goose."

FOR a long time Theodore Hook was fond of firing off puns, squibs, and epigrams at the expense of Samuel Rogers, the poet. The following lines are a good example of these

witticisms. It may be prefaced that Rogers' cadaverous appearance was such as to make him a butt for much fun on the part of all those wits who gathered at his famous breakfasts, as well as on the part of those who knew him less intimately—

Cries Sam, "All *Human Life* is frail,
E'en mine may not endure;
Then, lest it suddenly should fail,
I 'll hasten to insure."

At Morgan's office Sam arrived,
Reckoning without his host;
"Avaunt!" the frightened Morgan cried,
"I can't insure a ghost."

"Zounds! 'tis my poem, not my face;
Here, list while I recite it."
Said Morgan, "Seek some other place,
I cannot underwrite it."

THE BERNERS STREET HOAX.—Hook, with a couple of confederates assisting, was responsible for what was perhaps one of the greatest hoaxes ever perpetrated, the Berners Street Hoax of 1809. Six weeks were spent in busy preparation for the *coup*, and during that time about four thousand letters were despatched, all under various pretences, inviting the several recipients to call on a certain

day at the house of a Mrs Tottenham, a lady of property, residing at 54 Berners Street, who had, for some reason, fallen under the displeasure of this formidable trio.

Scarce had the eventful morning begun to break ere the neighbourhood resounded with cries of "sweep," uttered in every variety of tone, and proceeding from crowds of sooty urchins and their masters who had assembled by five o'clock beneath the windows of the devoted No. 54. In the midst of the wrangling of the rival professors, and the protestations of the repudiating housemaid, heavy waggons laden with chaldrons of coals from the different wharves, came rumbling up the street, blocking the thoroughfare, impeding one another, crushing and struggling to reach the same goal, amid a hurricane of imprecations from the respective *conducteurs*. Now among the gathering crowd, cleanly, cook-like men were to be seen, cautiously making their way, each with a massive wedding cake under his arm; tailors, bootmakers, upholders, undertakers with coffins, draymen with beer-barrels, &c., succeeded in shoals, and long before the cumbrous coal-waggons were enabled to move off, about a dozen travelling chariots and four, all ready for the reception of as many "happy pairs," came dashing up to the spot. Medical men with instruments for the amputation of limbs, attorneys prepared to cut off entails, clergy-

man summoned to minister to the mind, and artists engaged to pourtray the features of the body, unable to draw near in vehicles, plunged manfully into the mob. Noon came, and with it about forty fishmongers, bearing forty "cod and lobsters;" as many butchers with as many legs of mutton; and as the confusion reached its height, and the uproar became terrific, and the construction of the poor old lady grew to be bordering on temporary insanity, up drove the great Lord Mayor himself — state carriage, cocked hat, silk stockings, big wigs and all, to the intense gratification of Hook and his two associates, who, snugly ensconced in an apartment opposite, were witnessing the triumph of their scheme.

All this, perhaps, was comparatively commonplace, and within the range of a mediocre "joker of jokes." There were features, however, in the hoax, independent of its originality, which distinguished it for wit and *méchanceté* far above any of the numberless imitations to which it gave rise. Every family, it is said, has its secret, some point tender to the touch, some circumstance desirable to be suppressed; according to the proverb, "there is a skeleton in every house," and, as a matter of course, the more eminent and conspicuous the master of the house, the more busy are men's tongues with his private affairs, and the more likely are they to get scent of any concealed subject of

annoyance. Completely familiar with London gossip, and by no means scrupulous in the use of any information he might possess, Hook addressed a variety of persons of consideration, taking care to introduce allusion to some peculiar point sure of attracting attention, and invariably

closing with an invitation to No. 54 Berners Street. Certain revelations to be made respecting a complicated system of fraud pursued at the Bank of England brought the governor of that establishment; a similar device was employed to allure the chairman of the East India Company, while the Duke of Gloucester started off with Colonel Dalton to receive a communication from a dying woman, formerly a confiden-

tial attendant on his Royal Highness's mother; his were the royal liveries conspicuous on that occasion.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.—Hail! happy day! amiable season! when ill-timed offences of the past are forgotten in the well-timed *present!* and friendly gifts, like jobbing tailors, are charitably employed in repairing old *breaches!*

Doctors are sending in their bills for draughts, wistfully looking for drafts in return for their bills; and birds are sending *their* bills into the barky trees for food!

Banks are broken, and brooks in vain attempt to run, for Jack Frost, like a hard creditor, arrests them in their course; and there's no bailing them out! Yes! ships are frozen in, gardeners frozen out, and rivers frozen up!

The parish pumps are dry, and the dancing-masters in full play; and even little urchins, when it snows, give balls! Elderly maidens who issue forth in hopes of catching pretty men, return home with ordinary *chaps!*

Thrice pleasant day! when family parties assemble in one smiling circle, when near relations, once distant, are now invited, and garrulous grandmamas tell funny stories, making dutiful grandchildren laugh at their *relations!*

Delightful period of social intercourse! when good matches are brought in contact with lively sparks! Season of singular coincidences! when pastry cooks and profit urge one class, and love and pleasure another, to break the ice!

Sere and withered branches without their *leaves*, are lopped and chopped into fagots—and many a housemaid full of life (like the dead of old) is crossing the *sticks* fated to be burnt!

"Many happy returns!" which end in nothing, are wished by shallow friends; and the "best returns," which end in smoke, are puffed forth by labourers and apple-women!

Modern belles appear decked in fringes of fur (wrapping their chilly chins in *chinchilly* boas), and modern *eaves* in fringes of icicles! while careful old folks go out to *recruit* their bodies and *list* their *soles!*

AS a warning against punning, Theodore Hook wrote the following verses for young readers, to afford a warning and exhibit *a deformity to be avoided*, rather than an example to be followed:—

My little dears, who learn to read.
Pray, early learn to shun
That very silly thing indeed.
Which people call a PUN.

Read Entick's rules, and 'twill be found
How simple an offence
It is, to make the self-same sound
Afford a double sense.

For instance, *ale* may make you *ail*,
Your *aunt* an *ant* may kill.
You in a *vale* may buy a *veil*,
And *Bill* may pay the *bill*.
Or if to France your bark you steer,
At Dover it may be,
A *peer appears* upon the *pier*,
Who, blind, still goes to *sea*.

Thus one might say, when to a treat
Good friends accept our greeting,
'Tis *meet* that men who *meet* to eat
Should eat their *meat* when meeting.
Brawn on the *board's* no *bore* indeed,
Although from *boar* prepared ;
Nor can the *fowl*, on which we feed,
Foul feeding be declared.

Thus *one* ripe fruit may be a pear,
And yet be *pared* again,
And still be *one*, which seemeth rare
Until we do explain,
It therefore should be all your aim
To speak with ample care ;
For who, however fond of game,
Would choose to swallow *hair* ?

A fat man's *gait* may make us smile,
Who has no *gate* to close ;
The farmer sitting on his *style*
No *stylish* person knows.
Perfumers men of *scents* must be ;
Some *Scilly* men are bright ;
A *brown* man oft *deep read* we see,
A *black* a wicked *wight*.

Most wealthy men good *manors* have,
However vulgar they ;
And actors still the harder slave
The oftener they *play*.
So poets can't the *baize* obtain
Unless their tailors choose;
While grooms and coachmen not in vain
Each evening seek the *mews*.

The *dyer*, who by *dying* lives,
A *dire* life maintains ;
The glazier, it is known, receives
His profits from his *panes*.
By gardeners' *thyme* is tied, 'tis true,
When spring is in its prime :
But *time* or *tide* won't wait for you
If you are *tied* for *time*.

Then now you see, my little dears,
The way to make a pun ;
A trick which you, through coming years,
Should sedulously shun.
The fault admits of no defence,
For wheresoe'er 'tis found,
You sacrifice the *sound* for *sense*—
The *sense* is never *sound*.

So let your words and actions, too,
One single meaning prove,
And just in all you say or do,
You 'll gain esteem and love.
In mirth and play no harm you 'll know
When duty's task is done ;
But parents ne'er should let you go
Un*pun*ished for a PUN.

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